

# ANTIQUITY AND WE

Edited by Katarzyna Marciniak



ANTIQUITY  
AND WE

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Edited by Katarzyna Marciniak

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# ANTIQUITY AND WE

at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition



Edited by Katarzyna Marciniak

Faculty of “Artes Liberales”  
University of Warsaw  
Warsaw 2013

*Antiquity and We  
at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition*

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## INTRODUCTION

AS BEFITS A FOUNDING MYTH, in the beginning was chaos – the stormy transformations Poland commenced in 1989. They allowed us to take up new challenges from which emerged the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA), established in 1991 at the University of Warsaw. In the beginning was the word, as well. In the application submitted to the then Rector, Professor Andrzej Kajetan Wróblewski, Professor Jerzy Axer – the author of the idea and the founder of the Centre – wrote:

“The Centre is to serve as the initiator and coordinator of studies on the classical tradition in Polish culture writ large (including, in particular, writing, art, law, and the history of institutions and ideas) in the context of studies into this tradition within the territories bordering Poland (Ukraine, Belarus, the Baltic region, Slovakia, Hungary, Bohemia, and Germany – in particular, Prussia). The classical tradition is understood here to mean the entire Greek, Roman, and Byzantine legacy. Due to its historical traditions and geographical location, Poland constitutes a natural hub for such studies for the entirety of East-Central Europe.”<sup>1</sup>

The scholars associated at the Centre also decided to pay particular attention to “the shared traditions of the continent and the dissemination into society’s awareness of knowledge concerning our common roots.” Thus, OBTA was in the avant-garde of studies on the reception of Antiquity, which were then still struggling for their place among classical studies,

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<sup>1</sup> Jerzy Axer, *Wniosek o powołanie międzywydziałowego Ośrodka Badań nad Tradycją Antyczną w Polsce i w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej*, Dec. 12, 1991, from the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” UW Archive.



although their foundations were laid already in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by the remarkable Polish classical philologist and popularizer of Antiquity, Tadeusz Zieliński. At our Centre he will always be considered a Master, and the title of this volume is among our tributes to his memory.<sup>2</sup>

Unlike traditional classical philology, reception studies view Antiquity as a cultural experience. In consequence, rather than the classical world as such, we examine the images of that world as created in subsequent epochs, in accordance with the assumption that each new deciphering of the classical legacy gives us knowledge about those who make the decoding in the first place. In this way, Classical Antiquity becomes a reference point for generations, societies, and both small and large groups of culture recipients, wherever Mediterranean Civilization has managed to reach. Looking in the mirror of reception, comparing the various reflections and images emerging therein, we can better understand ourselves, others, and foreigners, who in fact cease to be foreigners the moment we realize they are looking in the same mirror. A new world unveils itself before the Humanities and scholarship in general – a world full of challenges and fascinating discoveries. Thus, the fact that OBTA's first and still valid address is ulica Nowy Świat [New World Street] may be much more than merely a coincidence.

It is ironic that the transformations reflected in the mirror of reception have made it lose its sheen. The experience of 20<sup>th</sup>-century totalitarianisms, the questioning of the importance of Mediterranean values, the twilight of classical education – together this makes us rarely look at the past, even though it is in the past that we can find both ourselves and our future, as Professor Jan Kieniewicz used to say. Indeed, his thesis is one of OBTA's underlying ideas.

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<sup>2</sup> See Tadeusz Zieliński, *Świat antyczny a my* [*The Ancient World and We*], Zygmunt Pomarański i Spółka, Zamość 1922 (a series of lectures held by the scholar at the Saint Petersburg University in 1901. Published for the first time in German as *Die Antike und wir*, in 1905, translated also into French and Romanian; the lectures were republished in Polish in Zieliński's collection of studies: *Po co Homer? Świat antyczny a my*, choice and edition by Andrzej Biernacki, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 1970).

Thus, OBTA undertook the mission to safeguard the mirror of Classical Antiquity – and to attempt to restore its splendour. Since this is an interdisciplinary task, representatives of various areas began to meet at the Centre, ones from all over the world. For it soon turned out that the way we focused our studies on East-Central Europe acted as a catalyst for inviting scholars from distant regions to come and cooperate with us. New teams, sections, committees, and laboratories began to arise, and all based on the Mediterranean community which reaches beyond geographical boundaries. That community also encompassed students, artists, and recipients of culture hailing from outside academic milieux, and this phenomenon gradually became an inherent part of the Centre’s popularizing and educational activity.



OBTA's logo

So – in the beginning was chaos and the word. With time, OBTA was transformed into the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales,” which later turned into the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” – a natural metamorphosis with the broadening of perspectives that emerge when we look in the mirror of Classical Antiquity. The word remained the most important element of the new structure. We wish our foundations to be in talks and debates in which ancient Greeks, Romans, and their spiritual heirs from all continents (both adults and children, along with creatures other than *Homo sapiens*) all have the right to speak. Hence our projects are devoted not only to the reception of Antiquity, but also to encounters between various cultures, to the search for the Mediterranean in Siberia and overseas, and to the problems of childhood and Animal Studies. Even dwarves have found a place at the Faculty, provoking discussions on the need – present also in Greek and Roman mythology – for humans to create non-humans as a way to tame the world.

And what about chaos? Well, the world cannot be fully tamed. As Ovid discovered in ancient times, transformations are what lay down the world's rhythm. Today, too, metamorphoses are taking place, ones different than those from Antiquity or from the aftermath of 1989, but ones that still issue numerous challenges for us to face. The reader who glances at the variety of projects, the abundance of disciplines, and the number of names and surnames running through the history of OBTA,<sup>3</sup> may indeed get the impression of chaos. However, if the reader stops for a while to reflect more deeply, s/he will discover the extremely precise logic of the development of a certain vision. S/he will discover an order in which the echo of the Platonic music of the spheres can be heard, full of harmony, and with a note of the uncontrollable desire to cross successive borders of knowledge in the eternal tension between Apollo and Dionysus.

As the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition, OBTA is today a part of the Faculty of "Artes Liberales." It implements interdisciplinary projects in cooperation with scholars from various continents: from America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia and New Zealand, combining academic reflection with educational and popularizing activities. The OBTA of today wishes to continue the tradition of the Centre established in 1991, and, additionally, to draw on the phenomenon of globalization, which gives the Greek and Roman legacy a novel opportunity to enter ever newer circles of the recipients of culture. In this sense, there is no old OBTA and new OBTA. There is the same idea in dialogue with the metamorphoses of contemporaneity.

This volume, prepared at the initiative of Professor Jerzy Axer, is devoted not only to the beginnings of OBTA, but also to its prospects and hopes. The reader will learn of them from the texts by Professor Jerzy Axer (*Antiquity and We – The Perspective of the Period of Transformation*) and Professor Jan Kieniewicz (*OBTA and Civilizational Studies. Experiences and Prospects*). The volume focuses on the initiatives which proved to be landmarks in the operation of the Centre and in the chain

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<sup>3</sup> The glossary of the most important names of structures inscribed in the history of the Centre can be of aid here, see p. 15.

of metamorphoses that led to the establishment of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.” Among those landmarks are: the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH), described by Professor Robert A. Sucharski (*OBTA UW – An Eastern Countenance*); the International School of Roman Law (MSPR), presented by Professor Witold Wołodkiewicz (*Roman Law at OBTA*); Modern Greek Philology, together with the range of activities at the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies (PSH), depicted by Professor Małgorzata Borowska (*Hellenic Studies*); and Cultural Studies into Mediterranean Civilization presented by Professor Jerzy Styka (*Mediterranean Studies*). Moreover, the reader will have the chance to get acquainted with our large-scale research programmes rooted in the ideas that accompanied the establishment of OBTA: Doctor Anna Skolimowska tells about the research and editorial work connected with the correspondence of Jan Dantyszek (*The Dantiscus Programme*), while Doctor Justyna Olko takes up the issue of the scholar’s autonomy and intercultural relations (*About Cross-Cultural Encounters and Academic Freedom*). Yet another important aspect of the operation of OBTA, related to the combining of academic work with artistic sensitivity, and which allows us to see what “the magnifying glass and the eye”<sup>4</sup> cannot see, is shown in the text by Professor Krzysztof Rutkowski, concerning the quest for classical beauty in Baudelaire’s landscapes of Paris (*Hades in Les Halles. Antiquity within the Expanse of Paris*). OBTA also means close inter-generational cooperation between scholars and students. Therefore, the youngest members of our community – namely, the doctoral students at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” who, following “the ancient path,” focus both on the ancient masterpieces of Mediterranean literature and the most recent cultural phenomena, like computer games based on Greek and Roman motifs – also present their own visions of reception studies here (*Glosses*). In closing, I would like to invite the reader to search for answers to the provocative question which, however, cannot today be omitted: why do we need Classical Antiquity and studies into that epoch at all? (*The Ancient Tradition in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Cui Bono?*).

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<sup>4</sup> A well-remembered phrase from Adam Mickiewicz – the bard of Polish Romanticism.

The structure of this volume proceeds from our vision of OBTA, in line with such dearly held notions as the Alma Mater or Patria, so we decided not to italicize Latin and Greek words, as we do not consider them foreign. And we kept the original diversity of texts, both in terms of form and content, as they reflect the uniqueness of the subjects raised and the personalities of their authors. But what all the texts have in common is the logic of research passion and the simple joy found in carrying out projects. Here I would like to thank all the co-creators of OBTA and of the current Faculty of “Artes Liberales” – scholars, students, and administration employees. It is impossible to refer to all of them by name,<sup>5</sup> but it must ever be remembered that it is people that create an institution – never the other way round.

And this volume is not a typical history of an institution. It has more in common with a journey through bygone and contemporary humanistic reflection – in an attempt to lead the reader a little off the beaten track. To set off, one needs first to find inside oneself the spirit of a seeker, along with curiosity, humility, but also a bit of rebellion and contestation vis-à-vis the surrounding reality. On this journey, one full of incredible encounters, challenges, and experiences, we will many a time look in the mirror of Antiquity. Sometimes we will find there the gruesome, blood-curdling image of the Medusa, and sometimes we will see the beautiful Narcissus, who will leave us unable to look away.<sup>6</sup> It will also happen that the mirror of reception will transform into the Mirror of Erised, in which the youngest hero of our time looks at himself and in which each of us can see what we desire most.



Studies on reception – both the sublimated reception over the centuries of masterpieces of art, and the contemporary reception present, for example,

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<sup>5</sup> For the list of the employees, see p. 297.

<sup>6</sup> See Katarzyna Marciniak, *Po co mitologia? – Świat współczesny w zwierciadle mitu*, “PAUza akademicka” 103–105 (2010), pp. 9–11, online: [http://pauza.krakow.pl/103\\_105\\_9\\_11\\_2010.pdf](http://pauza.krakow.pl/103_105_9_11_2010.pdf) (consulted: Nov. 3, 2013).

in the world of Harry Potter, built on references to Antiquity – give us the knowledge that draco dormiens nunquam titillandus, but also the courage to try despite all.

Katarzyna Marciniak



## GLOSSARY OF BASIC NAMES OF INSTITUTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS BOOK



The tympanum of the Zamoyski Palace, which is the seat of OBTA and the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” UW, Nowy Świat St. 69, Warsaw

**AAL** – The »Artes Liberales« Academy, a new form of academic education based on the experiences of inter-faculty individual studies in the humanities (see also: MISH), transformed into inter-university studies under the agreement concluded between leading Polish universities;

**AMU PAN** – Academy of Young Scholars at the Polish Academy of Sciences;

**ASP in Warsaw** – Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, the oldest Polish art school;

**CLAS** – Collegium Artes Liberales, which includes the “Artes Liberales” programme – an experimental study programme for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle studies conducted at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” UW (see: FAL). The programme of “Artes Liberales” is designed to restore awareness of the kindred nature of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, to conjoin thinking with artistic endeavour, and to foster the comprehensive, personal, and civic development of the individual;

**Collegium MISH** – College of Inter-Area Individual Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, an innovative model of studies created in



1992 at the University of Warsaw by Professor Jerzy Axer (first intake of students – 1993), later adopted by other leading universities in Poland and abroad (see also: AAL); until 2013, the College operated under the name of College of Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities;

**CS** – Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle studies held at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (first intake of students – 2004 within the framework of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe, see: OBTA; since 2008 – part of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales,” see: IBI AL), commonly called the Mediterranean Studies;

**ERC** – European Research Council, established in 2007, providing funds for pioneer academic research in Europe;

**FAL** – Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” the youngest, twentieth faculty of the University of Warsaw, established in 2012 as the successor of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (see: IBI AL);

**FIAL** – The “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation, established in 1997 by Professor Jerzy Axer and Professor Jan Kieniewicz, “on the basis of the inspirations of Polish and foreign academics convinced that it is necessary to implement new, experimental educational methods in the spirit of ARTES LIBERALES, both in higher education and in schools at lower levels, and on belief in the value of the classical tradition and the Mediterranean heritage, in their usefulness for the harmonious development of European culture, with simultaneous retaining of the national and ethnic identity of individual countries” (fragment of the statute, see: <http://www.ial.org.pl>);

**FNP** – Foundation for Polish Science;

**IBI AL** – Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales,” established in 2008 as a result of the transformation of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (see: OBTA).

In 2012, the Institute grew into the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (see: FAL);

**IDIEZ** – Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas (Mexico) – Zacatecas Institute for Teaching and Research in Ethnology, didactic and research institution, independent of academic structures in Mexico, which employs students and young researchers who are native speakers of Nahuatl;

**IFK** – Institute of Classical Studies, at the University of Warsaw it is a part of the Faculty of Polish Studies;

**IGITI** – Институт гуманитарных историко-теоретических исследований имени А. В. Полетаева (ИГИТИ) – Poletayev Institute for Theoretical and Historical Studies in the Humanities at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, established in 2002, it carries out innovative, interdisciplinary research projects and it is involved also in educational activities;

**JU** – The Jagiellonian University;

**LCLF** – The Loeb Classical Library Foundation, established by the testament of James Loeb (1867–1933), affiliated with Harvard University. The Foundation supports initiatives connected with research on Classical Antiquity around the world, and every two years awards grants in an open international contest. Moreover, the Foundation also publishes well-known series of Greek and Roman texts both in the original and translated into English (the Loeb series);

**LIBAL** – Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Research Artes Liberales, permanent unit of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (see: FAL);

**KNoKA PAN** – Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences;

**MISH** – See: Collegium MISH;

**MNiSW** – Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland;

**MPD** – International PhD Projects, programme of the Foundation for Polish Science (see: FNP), at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” implemented since 2010 within the scope of the research theme: *The Traditions of Mediterranean Humanism and the Challenges of Our Times: The Frontiers of Humanity*;

**MSH** – East-Central European School in the Humanities, the most important educational programme for foreign countries, implemented by the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (see: OBTA), and then by the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (see: IBI AL), in the years 1996–2008 (see also: MSH EW);

**MSH EW** – East-European School in the Humanities, programme resulting from the transformation of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (see: MSH) in 2009, implemented at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (see: IBI AL) and, currently, at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (see: FAL);

**MSPR** — International School of Roman Law, established in 2001 at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (see: OBTA), within the framework of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (see: MSH, MSH EW);

**NCN** – National Science Centre, executive agency founded in 2010 to support academic activities within the scope of basic research;

**NPRH** – National Programme for the Development of Humanities, established by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland (see: MNiSW) in 2010 in the aim of supporting research in Human Studies of

major importance for the Polish national identity and of supporting the popularization of Polish humanistic research in the world;

**NTDS** – Networked Transdisciplinary Doctoral Studies held at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (see: FAL) together with the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw;

**OBTA** – Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe, an independent unit of the University of Warsaw, founded in 1991. Between 2008 and 2012, after certain structural transformations, OBTA – Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition – was part of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (see: IBI AL). Since October 2012, it has been a permanent unit of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (see: FAL);

**OSI HESP** – Higher Education Support Program of the George Soros Open Society Institute Foundation, supporting reforms in higher education, aiming to strengthen democracy and the development of civil society;

**PAN** – Polish Academy of Sciences;

**PAU** – Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences;

**PSH** – Laboratory of Hellenic Studies, established at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (see: OBTA) in 1993, currently part of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (see: FAL);

**PTF** – Polish Philological Society, association of researchers and admirers of the classical tradition established in 1893 in Lviv by Professor Ludwik Ćwikliński and operating until this day, with the purpose of popularizing and cultivating knowledge of Classical Antiquity;

**UW** – University of Warsaw.



## ANTIQUITY AND WE – THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PERIOD OF TRANSFORMATION

**T**HE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE FIRST SOLIDARITY (1980–1981) and the subsequent period of martial law in Poland (1981–1983) were formative experiences for those who previously had been searching in academic circles for a suitable niche in which the ideological requirements of the system would be the least tangible. When in 1964 I was taking my secondary-school leaving exam, I thought that Classical Philology was that niche.<sup>1</sup>

Back then I was not interested so much in Classical Antiquity as in the past, and in the broadest sense possible. However, Greek and Roman Antiquity seemed to me the safest alibi for ensuring myself the freedom to read and think beyond what was being force-fed, and beyond the temptation to engage in the surrounding reality. The very traditional, almost 19<sup>th</sup>-century mode of teaching in the then Department of Classical Philology and the complete freedom from the reigning ideology (apart from a few “external” subjects) made the time of studying a pleasant otium and gave room for individual self-education. At the same time, thanks to Professor Kazimierz Kumaniecki and Professor Lidia Winniczuk (who harmoniously cooperated with each other in my student years), a certain ideological message got through to us. It was not enunciated explicitly, but rather implicitly. It was the conviction that the reception of ancient

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<sup>1</sup> See Jerzy Axer, Andrzej M. Kobos, *Wyjście z niszy*, in *Po drogach uczonych. Z członkami Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności rozmawia Andrzej M. Kobos*, vol. 5, PAU, Kraków 2012, pp. 1–27.

tradition was a living part of Polish collective memory and a marker of its transformations; that being aware of that tradition authorized and obliged us to speak and think of Poland and its place within Mediterranean civilization. In the 1970s I became fully aware of that message, owing to close personal contact with Professor Kumaniecki.<sup>2</sup>

In 1980, and for the first time for my generation, the call to take responsibility for contemporary Poland was clearly addressed to academic circles.<sup>3</sup> Having no experience at all in any public activity and having no knowledge of HR management, I agreed (first as the vice dean and then as the dean) to assume co-responsibility for the Faculty of Polish Studies, part of which was the then Institute of Classical Studies. The unique personality of Professor Jadwiga Puzynina, elected the “Dean of Solidarity,” and who, in spring 1981, offered me the position of her deputy, from the very beginning imparted a sense of mission to the experience. The strikes and martial law served as an accelerated “crisis management” course.

Even before 1981’s strike at the University, I turned to the first Rector elected in free elections, Professor Henryk Samsonowicz, with the idea which I had been carrying in my heart as a testament of my Master, Kazi-

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<sup>2</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Kazimierz Kumaniecki 1905–1977*, in *W kręgu wielkich humanistów. Kultura antyczna w Uniwersytecie Warszawskim po I wojnie światowej*, ed. Iza Biezuńska-Małowist, PWN, Warszawa 1991, pp. 90–113, Italian edition: Jerzy Axer, *Kazimierz Kumaniecki*, in *Antichisti dell’Università di Varsavia nel Novecento*, a cura di Iza Biezuńska-Małowist, Jovene, Napoli 1992 (“Index” 21), pp. 87–110; see also Jerzy Axer, *Czas próby. Znaczenie Kazimierza Kumanieckiego dla losów filologii klasycznej w PRL*, “Przegląd Humanistyczny” 6/435 (2012), pp. 3–19 and idem, *Kazimierz Kumaniecki and the Evolution of Classical Studies in the People’s Republic of Poland*, in *Classics and Communism. Greek and Latin behind the Iron Curtain*, eds. György Karsai, Gábor Klaniczay, David Movrin, Elżbieta Olechowska, Collegium Budapest Institute for Advanced Studies–University of Ljubljana Press, Faculty of Arts–Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” University of Warsaw, Ljubljana–Budapest–Warsaw 2013, pp. 187–211.

<sup>3</sup> The events of March 1968 came to me as a big shock, but I found them to be a confirmation of the diagnosis of the system as an occupational regime; thus, I reaffirmed myself in the decision to isolate myself rather than to accept the invitation to act.

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mierz Kumaniecki (deceased in 1977). I had determined that, when the opportunity arose – meaning the next political thaw – I would endeavour to establish a laboratory at the University which would put into circulation within Polish academic culture the literary and historical sources written in Latin and important for the restoration and nursing of national memory. The laboratory and the editorial series were to bear the name “Ad Fontes.”



Prof. Bronisław Geremek and Tadeusz Mazowiecki at OBTA's session dedicated to Prof. Tadeusz Zieliński, July 7, 2006, UW's Ballroom. In the foreground Prof. Juliusz Domański, in the background Joanna Szutta – OBTA's longtime employee

From today's perspective, treating Neolatina as necessary equipment for new generations in their never-ending fight for independence might seem outlandish. But that was how I used to understand ancient tradition and its role in the contemporary world in regard to the reasonable strategy adopted by Kazimierz Morawski and his student, Kumaniecki, who treated Neolatina as a way to speak of Poland in the times of occupation.<sup>4</sup> Such thinking was also supported by the mood of the moment. The patriotic

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<sup>4</sup> More on this subject in my paper *Kazimierz Kumaniecki and the Evolution of Classical Studies...*, op. cit., pp. 201–203.



songs of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century Bar Confederates were being sung, their inspiring Father Marek was awaited,<sup>5</sup> the spirit of the gentry's *sejmiki* (local legislatures) was resurrected in the strike committees, and the national bards of Polish Romanticism Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855) and Juliusz Słowacki (1809–1849) were to be the patrons of the “Solidarity” ethos – a new incarnation of the messianic idea.



Prof. Leszek Kołakowski with students during one of his lectures at OBTA, Conference Room, Nowy Świat St. 69, Spring 2003.  
In the first row, second from the right Ariadna Lewańska

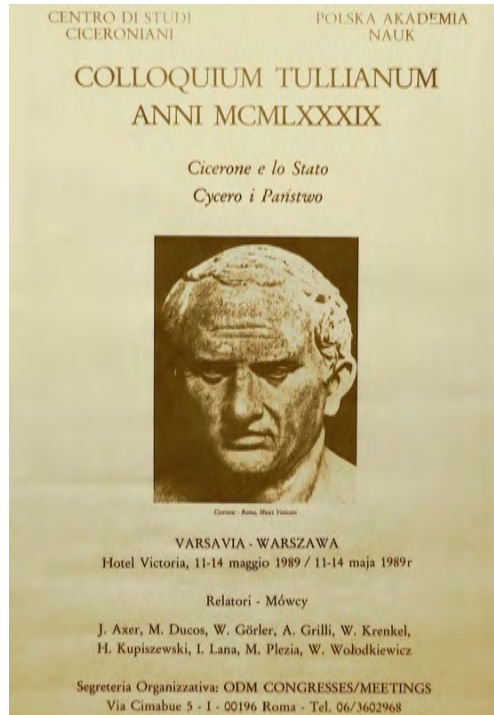
Rector Samsonowicz received me with his trademark cordiality and proposed I return to the matter soon – once things were a bit calmer.

As it turned out, I had years rather than months to think the idea through. A substitute for the implementation of my idea was the foundation, during martial law in 1982, of the Laboratory for Editing Greek and

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<sup>5</sup> The Bar Confederation (1768–1772) was set up by Polish nobles (*szlachta*). It was directed against Russian influences and King Stanisław August Poniatowski. One of the spiritual leaders of the Bar Confederation was Father Marek Jandołowicz. He became later a legendary figure, inspiring many artists of Polish Romanticism. The myth of the Bar Confederation was part of patriotic education in Poland.

Latin Sources in the Institute of Classical Studies – this was the “mask” under which I intended to implement my strategy.<sup>6</sup>



The poster announcing the 7<sup>th</sup> Colloquium Tullianum *Cicero and the State*, May 11–14, 1989, Warsaw

A unique experience for me was the organization of the 7<sup>th</sup> Colloquium Tullianum in May 1989 in Warsaw. Back then, Colloquia were tools employed by the foreign policy of Italy, usually attended by its President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs. I understood that the proposal to organize this undertaking in Warsaw was an opportunity for Europe to manifest its support for the oncoming changes in Poland – and on the very eve of the first free elections since World War II. The title of the Colloquium, *Cicero*

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<sup>6</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Zakład Edytorstwa Łacińskiego i Greckiego Instytutu Filologii Klasycznej Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego*, “Informationes. Biuletyn Papieskiego Instytutu Studiów Kościelnych” (Rome–Warsaw), 5 (1991), pp. 63–71.

*and the State*, fit those circumstances well.<sup>7</sup> The person in charge of the programme on the part of the Italians was Professor Scevola Mariotti, an outstanding expert in Latin Studies and a friend of Kumaniecki, who picked me (as his student and a Ciceronian expert) to represent Poland.



The ceremonious awarding of the Medal of Merit for the University of Warsaw to Julie Kidd, President of The Endeavor Foundation (formerly, Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation) from New York, which has been supporting our activities for 15 years. At the microphone – the Laureate. In the first row HM Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Reverend Eparch Prof. Borys Gudziak, in the second row Prof. Jan Madey. Oct. 25, 2004, UW's Senate Hall

I noticed a clear parallel between the decision taken by Kumaniecki in the climate of the “Thaw” of October 1956, to convene an international

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<sup>7</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Ciceronianismo nell'antica cultura polacca*, in the bulletin published on this occasion: *Cicero Polonorum*, Accademia Polacca delle Scienze, Varsavia 1989, pp. 3–8.

congress in Warsaw, to be held on the 2000<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the murder of Cicero,<sup>8</sup> and my own chance as created by the Colloquium offer.

In both cases, it was crucial to use the classical tradition as the message addressed to the elites of the Polish nation, then making yet another attempt to liberate itself from tyranny and regain parliamentary freedoms.



The ceremonious awarding of the Medal of Merit for the University of Warsaw to Julie Kidd. In the foreground: the Laureate and her husband Wilmot Kidd, visible in the background: Prof. Andrzej Borowski, Dr. Anna Axer, Prof. Jan Madey.  
UW's Senate Hall, Oct. 25, 2004

The use of the figure of Cicero as the patron of “Poland’s return to Europe” was, at the same time, deeply rooted in the tradition of the *IRzeczpospolita* – the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – and the gentry-like understanding of the idea of republican freedoms.<sup>9</sup> Both Polish historical

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<sup>8</sup> See *Acta sessionis Ciceroniana diebus 3–5 mensis Decembris a. 1957 Varsoviae habitae*, ed. Kazimierz Kumaniecki, PWN, Warszawa 1960.

<sup>9</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Trening oratorski jako składnik wychowania obywatelskiego w systemie republikańskim. Przypadek polski*, in *Retoryka antyczna i jej dziedzictwo*, ed. Jerzy Axer, “Acta Societatis Philologiae Polonorum,” vol. II, Aletheia, Warszawa 1996, pp. 134–135.

experience and the academic tradition of studies on Cicero in the times when Poland was partitioned by its neighbours (1795–1918) made the choice of Marcus Tullius as the emissary of the West something altogether natural.<sup>10</sup>



The ceremonious awarding of a doctorate honoris causa of the University of Warsaw to Prof. Ihor Ševčenko. From the left: Dean of the Faculty of History Prof. Piotr Bieliński, Prof. Ihor Ševčenko, HM Rector Prof. Piotr Węgleński, Prof. Henryk Samsonowicz, Prof. Jerzy Axer. Dec. 5, 2001, UW's Senate Hall

The success of the conference seemed to powerfully confirm the belief that the ancient tradition could be an able carrier of ideas and attitudes

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<sup>10</sup> The most important Ciceronian studies of that period are: Kazimierz Morawski, *M. Tullius Cicero. Życie i dzieła*, Akademia Umiejętności, Kraków 1911 and Tadeusz Zieliński, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*, Teubner, Leipzig 1897 (the last edition expanded and revised by the author appeared in 1929). Their counterpart in the period of People's Poland was the work of Kumaniecki; see for example his book *Cyceron i jego współcześni* (Czytelnik, Warszawa 1959; Italian edition: *Cicerone e la crisi della repubblica romana*, Centro di Studi Ciceroniani, Roma 1972) targeted at wider audience.

important for the present and future of Poland – and indeed of the entire region then liberating itself from Soviet domination.<sup>11</sup>

Hence my conviction in proposing to Rector Andrzej Kajetan Wróblewski that we return to the idea of establishing a separate centre implementing the programme of “Ad Fontes” at the University.<sup>12</sup> Therefore, I decided to apply for the creation of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA).

I did so, because I believed that Poland’s recovery of independence opened the prospects for a “return to the sources,” not only within the borders of contemporary Poland, but also across the lands and times encompassed within the tradition of the old Commonwealth. The notion of “East-Central Europe” meant reflection on the territory separated in accordance with a certain historiographical concept, rooted in Polish tradition, of which I was not then fully aware. The precursor here was Oskar Halecki, émigré historian, and the idea was further developed by the Hungarian historian, Jenő Szűcs.<sup>13</sup> In the times when I was establishing OBTA, the term “East-Central Europe” was used in two important contexts: Professor Piotr Wandycz introduced it into his history of the region, and Professor

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<sup>11</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Latin as a Sign of Life? The Reception of the Ancient Tradition as a Marker in the Analysis of the Sovietization Process in Poland*, in *Philosophy, Society and the Cunning of History in Eastern Europe*, ed. Costica Bradatan, Routledge, London–New York 2012, pp. 119–127.

<sup>12</sup> The final concept was submitted to the Rector in a letter dated December 12, 1991, at the initiative of Professor Tomasz Mikocki from the Institute of Archaeology of the University of Warsaw and me, and, six days later, the Senate established the unit upon the request of the Rector. I was appointed the Director, Professor Mikocki – the Vice-Director, and Professor Adam Miłobędzki from the Institute of Art History of the University of Warsaw – the Chairperson of the Council. OBTA owes much to him.

<sup>13</sup> See Oscar Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History*, Sheed & Ward, London–New York 1950 (published in Poland as *Historia Europy – jej granice i podziały*, trans. Jan Maria Kłoczowski, Instytut Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, Lublin 1994); Jenő Szűcs, *The Three Historical Regions of Europe*, “Acta Historica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae” 29 (1983), pp. 131–184 (published in Poland as *Trzy Europy*, trans. Jan Maria Kłoczowski, Instytut Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej, Lublin 1995).

Jerzy Kłoczowski used it in the name of the Institute established at that time in Lublin.<sup>14</sup>



The presentation of MISH diplomas to graduates. From the left: MISH graduate and today assistant professor at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” Dr. Katarzyna Sadkowska, Małgorzata Cybulska-Braun, Prof. Andrzej Z. Makowiecki, HM Rector of the University of Warsaw Prof. Piotr Węgleński. OBTA, Conference Room, Nowy Świat St. 69, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> See Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Price of Freedom. A History of East-Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present*, Routledge, London–New York 1992 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. in 2001). The author justifies, from the ideological point of view, the distinction of the region already a few years before, see his paper *O historycznej tożsamości Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, “Tygodnik Powszechny” 18 (1987). The term was used in circles connected with the Institute of East-Central Europe, established in 1991 by Jerzy Kłoczowski in Lublin. Now, the term is more and more often considered to be a temporary solution, connected with the period of political transformation in this part of Europe; the belief that the term should be replaced with “Central Europe” is more and more common. In our part of Europe, such postulates are made mainly by Czech historians, but they are also frequent among their Polish colleagues (see for example: Antoni Podraza, *Europa Środkowa jako region historyczny*, in *Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia od X do XVIII wieku – jedność czy różnorodność?*, eds. Krzysztof Baczkowski, Jerzy Smołucha, Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego Societas Vistulana, Kraków 2005, pp. 25–39).

I was then led by the memory of the *I Rzeczpospolita*, which of course also concerns the area of present-day Lithuania, along with western Belarus and Ukraine, that is, territories which are difficult to include within the term “Central Europe.” But above all I was convinced that “East-Central Europe” was useful for describing the reception of the classical tradition in European culture and the place of Poland within that reception, as it demarcated the space between Germany, Russia, and the Balkans which, in the syntheses of the phenomenon, were almost totally absent.

## **Christian A. Johnson**

### **Endeavor Foundation**

The Endeavor Foundation (formerly, Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation),  
our unflagging supporter

On the other hand, I was, and still am, completely opposed to descriptions of the classical tradition of the past epochs that rely on contemporary political maps. Such “national” approaches lead – in my opinion – to deep deformities of the research perspective.<sup>15</sup>

The aim of the newly established Centre was the multi-axial development of interdisciplinary research on the reception of the classical tradition in the region perceived in this manner, in intense cooperation with researchers from other countries which also draw on the inheritance of the *I Rzeczpospolita*. The programme conference of OBTA was held in

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<sup>15</sup> Such a concept is still represented by *Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike. Das klassische Altertum und seine Rezeptionsgeschichte*, vols. 1–12/2: *Altertum A–Z*, vols. 13–15/3: *Rezeptions- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, vol. 16: *Register zu den Bänden 1–12/2 des Neuen Pauly*, eds. Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider, Manfred Landfester, Stuttgart–Weimar 1996–2003; English edition: *Brill’s New Pauly. Encyclopaedia of the Ancient World*, eds. Hubert Cancik, Helmuth Schneider (vols. 1–15: *Antiquity*), Manfred Landfester (vols. 16–20: *Classical Tradition*), Brill, Leiden–Boston 2002–2010. See entry *Polen*, eds. Jerzy Axer, Jerzy Kolendo, in *Der Neue Pauly*, op. cit., vol. 15/2, pp. 391–411 (the entry’s authors: Jerzy Axer, Jacek Brzozowski, Juliusz Domański, Lech Kalinowski, Zsolt Kiss, Jerzy Kolendo, Tomasz Mikocki, Karol Myśliwiec, Elżbieta Sarnowska-Temeriusz, Stanisław Stabryła, Witold Wołodkiewicz). There one may also find the basic bibliography concerning this field.



autumn 1992 in the Old Orangery in Warsaw's beautiful Royal Łazienki Park. The climate of the time is well reflected in the speeches that opened the conference – by Professor Aleksander Gieysztor acting on behalf of the European “West,” and by the Byzantine expert from Harvard, Professor Ihor Ševčenko, a Ukrainian émigré representing the European “East.”<sup>16</sup>



HM Rector of the University of Warsaw Prof. Piotr Węgleński and Prof. Marek Wąsowicz present a MISH diploma to a graduate. Oct. 25, 2004, UW's Senate Hall

With a certain delay I realized that the Centre was the second, or maybe even the first unit in the world to propose separating the reception of the classical tradition as a field of interdisciplinary research at a major university. At the same time, the Institute for the Classical Tradition was established at Boston University by Wolfgang Haase and Meyer Reinhold. In the beginning, the concept of OBTA did not stipulate carrying out any didactic classes and, theoretically, did not require staff employments. It was to be a “milieu.” Such assumptions were to protect us against bureaucracy and from becoming similar to traditional university structures, as well as to enable the widest possible national and international cooperation.

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<sup>16</sup> We published the conference materials in the volume: *Tradycje antyczne w kulturze europejskiej. Perspektywa polska*, ed. Agnieszka Rabińska, in the series “Eseje i Studia,” ed. Jerzy Axer, vol. 1, OBTA, Warszawa 1995.

In the years 1993–1995, the programme “Latin in Poland and East-Central Europe” was launched (ten teams), together with a system of workshops and domestic and international seminars.<sup>17</sup> For several years, such a formula was maintained and a group of very few researchers was employed as staff academics. A change was forced in time, when I accepted, in 1992, the proposal of Rector Wróblewski to organize and manage the Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities (MISH, first intake – June 1993).<sup>18</sup> This commenced the gradual transformation of OBTA’s staff into a teaching staff, whose main task was to take care of the experimental form of studies. Among those who were particularly involved in MISH’s development from its beginnings were Professor Ewa Wipszycka from the Institute of History, University of Warsaw, Professor Barbara Bokus from the Faculty of Psychology, University of Warsaw, and Professor Andrzej

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<sup>17</sup> The publishing series then initiated were continued for many years. See the series “Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty Naukowe,” ed. Jerzy Axer – in the years 1995–1999 twelve volumes were published (*Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty 1–2: Między Slavia Latina i Slavia Orthodoxa*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1995; *Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty 3–4: Nauki matematyczno-przyrodnicze. Muzykografia. Literatura myślicielska XIII–XV w.*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1995; *Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty 5–6: Antiquitates. Od Jana Zamoyskiego do Stefana Cybulskiego*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1997; *Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty 7–9: Pomniki prawa doby Renesansu w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1999; *Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty 10–12: Studia nad łaciną średniowieczną w Polsce*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1998) and the series “Eseje i Studia,” ed. Jerzy Axer – between 1995 and 2006 seven volumes were published (vol. 1: *Tradycje antyczne w kulturze europejskiej. Perspektywa polska*, ed. Agnieszka Rabińska, OBTA, Warszawa 1995; vol. 2: Thomas M. Conley, *Byzantine Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Poland*, OBTA, Warszawa 1994; vol. 3: Ihor Ševčenko, *Ukraina między Wschodem a Zachodem. Różne oblicza świata Piotra Mohyły. Polska w dziejach Ukrainy*, OBTA, Warszawa 1996; vol. 4: *Panorama lojalności. Prusy Królewskie i Prusy Książęce w XVI wieku*, ed. Anna Skolimowska, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2001; vol. 5: *Terra Marique. The Cultural Intercourse between the European Center and Periphery in Modern Time*, ed. Jan Kieniewicz, OBTA, Warszawa 2001; vol. 6: *Rhetoric of Transformation*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2003; vol. 7: Jan Okoń, *Na scenach jezuickich w dawnej Polsce (rodzimość i europejskość)*, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2006).

<sup>18</sup> See the UW’s MISH website: <http://mish.uw.edu.pl/> (consulted: Oct. 29, 2013).

Makowiecki from the Faculty of Polish Studies, University of Warsaw, and who later, exactly because of MISH, transferred to OBTA. Also closely involved in MISH for a certain period was Professor Halina Manikowska from the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences, later from OBTA.

Issues related to the development of MISH are not the subject of this book. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized that the success of the idea to establish elite humanistic and social studies in Poland, first, at the University of Warsaw and then in eight other leading Polish universities owes much to the people raised in the “classical niche.” It was the classical philologists of my generation who became its first leaders, not only in Warsaw, but also in Poznań, Lublin, and Wrocław.

Since MISH compelled the development of staff, we used the situation to later launch two cycles of studies, more strictly related to the basic area of OBTA research, i.e., the classical tradition. These were undergraduate studies in Modern Greek (since 2002/2003) preceded by Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies (started in academic year 1997/1998),<sup>19</sup> and undergraduate and MA Cultural Studies in Mediterranean Civilization (since academic year 2004/2005).<sup>20</sup>

Starting in 1996, OBTA also became a centre for the organization of the programme under the name of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH).<sup>21</sup> The programme aimed at providing a shared education for academic staff from Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, Moldova, and Poland. The territorial reach coincided with our research premises, and the classical tradition constituted – especially in the first decade – an

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<sup>19</sup> See the paper by Małgorzata Borowska, *Hellenic Studies*, p. 99, in the present volume.

<sup>20</sup> See the paper by Jerzy Styka, *Mediterranean Studies*, p. 125, in the present volume.

<sup>21</sup> Here I wish to stress the vital roles in the development of this idea played by Prof. Janusz Rieger from the Institute of Polish Language of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Dr. Andrzej Tymowski from the American Council of Learned Societies (New York), neither of whom were then employed at OBTA. The history of East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH), transformed in 2009 into the East-European School in the Humanities (MSH EW), is described in this volume by its current programme director – Robert A. Sucharski, in his paper: *OBTA UW – An Eastern Countenance*, p. 69.

important component of the curriculum. Its reception proved to be a convenient context for mediation and joint understanding – a good meeting place for people having different memories and historical experiences. From these roots also grew our activity in international circles that propagated teaching in the spirit of liberal education.<sup>22</sup>



The logos of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” and the Faculty of “Artes Liberales”

The intensity of the efforts undertaken by MSH from 2000, including ten big sessions attended by ca. four-hundred scholarship holders per year, and the foundation, upon my request, of the inter-university network: the »Artes Liberales« Academy (under the patronage of the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland) entailed the necessity to reorga-

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<sup>22</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *What Is Liberal Education? Can It Support Both Freedom and Equality? Is It for Everybody?* – inaugural lecture at the conference *What Does Liberal Education Offer The Civil Society?*, in Budapest (Oct. 24, 1996), published in “Kritika & Kontext” (Bratislava) 4 (1997), pp. 116–118; idem, *How the Classical Tradition Can Serve to Promote Liberal Education in the Twenty-First Century: The East-Central Europe Case Example* – lecture held in the frame of *The Educational Leadership Program*, New York Forum (Oct. 20, 1997), published in “Kritika & Kontext” (Bratislava) 1 (1998), pp. 113–116; see also Jerzy Axer, *Od humanistycznej Respublica Litteraria do Kolegium Artes Liberales*, in *Collegium/College/Kolegium. Kolegium i wspólnota akademicka w tradycji europejskiej i amerykańskiej*, eds. Mark O’Connor, Piotr Wilczek, IBI AL UW–Wydawnictwo Naukowe Sub Lupa, Boston–Warszawa 2011, pp. 16–21; Jerzy Axer, Richard A. Detweiler, *International Perspectives on Liberal Education: An Assessment in Two Parts*, B (by Jerzy Axer): *International Perspectives on Liberal Education: Polish Case Example*, in *Transforming Undergraduate Education. Theory that Compels and Practices that Succeed*, ed. Donald W. Harward, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Plymouth, UK 2012, pp. 239–252.

nize OBTA. In 2005, the Senate of the University made it an inter-faculty basic unit within the scope of didactic, research, and academic activity, elaborating new regulations, while the Academic Council of OBTA was granted the competences of a Faculty Council within the scope of the studies organized. Acting in such mode, for the next years we were heading, more or less consciously, toward transformation into a faculty institution.



Prof. Donald W. Harward's seminar on education in the spirit of artes liberales. From the left: Dr. Marta Bucholc, Prof. Robert A. Sucharski, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Prof. Donald W. Harward, Dr. Elżbieta Olechowska, Prof. Jan Kieniewicz, Prof. Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz. Autumn 2011, IBI AL, White Villa, Dobra St. 72

The situation was further changed by Poland's accession to the European Union in 2004 and the new law on higher education. We decided to transform OBTA into an institution that would be capable of operating in such circumstances with maximum effectiveness. On January 23, 2008, the Centre was transformed into the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies "Artes Liberales," to be promoted after four years later, in 2012, into the Faculty of "Artes Liberales." Thus, OBTA became an internal unit, regain-

ing the possibility to return to its primary functions. The first director of OBTA in the new shape was Professor Jan Kieniewicz.

The unique internal structure which divided the Institute into committees and laboratories still allowed for quite unrestricted elaboration of new research programmes, including research on the reception of classical tradition proposed by the persons interested, along with the creation of teams gathering specialists in various disciplines, people wide open to cooperation with circles from outside the University.



Prof. Piotr Wilczek and Prof. Krzysztof Rutkowski

At the same time, the potential of this tradition for renewing the humanities became an undeniable catalyzer of other interesting educational innovations, including the idea to create a Polish counterpart of an American college as an autonomous structure under the name Collegium Artes Liberales. Professors Piotr Wilczek<sup>23</sup> and Krzysztof Rutkowski<sup>24</sup> invaluable contributed to the further success of the Collegium.

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<sup>23</sup> A profiled study-major, under the name Artes Liberales, based on my project, was accepted by the Senate of the University of Warsaw in 2007. The unit – the Collegium Artes Liberales – was founded a year later. See also above, n. 22, and the Collegium's website: <http://www.clas.mish.uw.edu.pl/> (consulted: Oct. 29, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> See the paper by Krzysztof Rutkowski, *Hades in Les Halles. Antiquity within the Expanse of Paris*, p. 179, in the present volume.

Looking at the period 1992–2008 from today’s perspective, I find it a time well-used for the permanent inscribing of OBTA, along with the research plans which accompanied its foundation, into Polish academic culture.



Cover of Tadeusz Zieliński’s *Autobiography and Diaries 1939–1944*

This fact is amply demonstrated by the entry into world academic research of our way of viewing the reception of the classical tradition as a phenomenon to be analyzed on the scale of the region rather than in accordance with the contemporary political map.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> See *Łacina jako język elit*, concept and scholarly editing Jerzy Axer, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2004; see also Jerzy Axer with the assistance of Katarzyna Tomaszuk, *The Classical Tradition in Central-Eastern Europe*, in *A Companion to the Classical Tradition*, ed. Craig W. Kallendorf, Wiley–Blackwell, Malden, MA–Oxford 2007, pp. 132–156; extended version: *Recepcja śródziemnomorskiej tradycji antycznej w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej. Reception of the Mediterranean Classical Tradition in Central and Eastern European Culture*, in *Czy Polska leży nad Morzem Śródziemnym? Does Poland Lie on the Mediterranean?*, eds. Robert Kusek, Joanna Sanetra-Szeliga, Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury, Kraków 2012, pp. 18–81.

The highest international standards are also met by the Laboratory for Editing Sources, managed by Doctor Anna Skolimowska, whose pride is the editorial work on the correspondence by Jan Dantyszek.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, OBTA has meaningfully contributed to research on New Latin literature and the role of Latin in national cultures.<sup>27</sup> Of surpassing value is also the teamwork on the reception of Classical Antiquity in Polish literature of the Romanticism, carried out for several years under the supervision of Professor Maria Kalinowska.<sup>28</sup> The Laboratory of Hellenic Studies (PSH), established by Professor Małgorzata Borowska, which for years made avail of the experience and council of Professor Oktawiusz Jurewicz, through its publications and activity has been thoroughly changing the knowledge of

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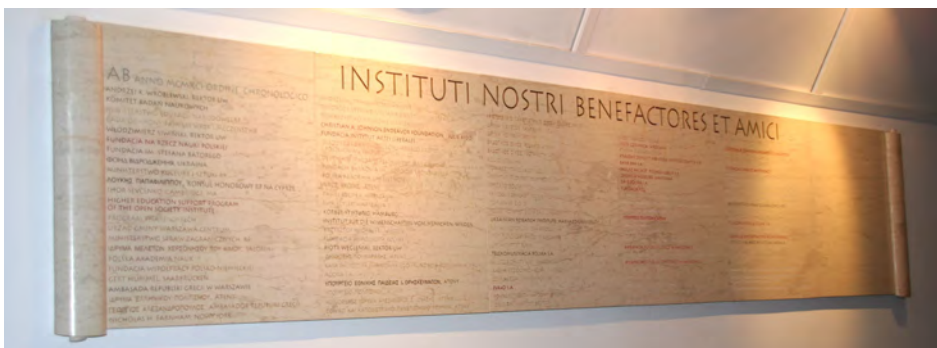
<sup>26</sup> See the paper by Anna Skolimowska, *The Dantiscus Programme*, p. 139, in the present volume.

<sup>27</sup> In particular, see the volume *Łacina jako język elit*, op. cit. See also Jerzy Axer, *Neo-Latin Studies and National Identity: The Case of East-Central Europe*, "Eos" 89 (2002), pp. 331–342.

<sup>28</sup> See the team projects by Professor Kalinowska implemented in OBTA since 1997: *Antyk romantyków – model europejski i wariant polski* [*The Antiquity of the Romanticists – European Model and Polish Variant*] (1997–2000); *Przekształcenia antycznych mitów, tematów i symboli w sztuce romantyzmu i modernizmu* [*Transformation of Ancient Myths, Subjects, and Symbols in the Art of the Romanticism and Modernism*] (2001–2004); *Filhellenizm romantyków – specyfika polska i konteksty europejskie (słowiańskie i zachodnie)* [*Philhellenism of the Romanticists – The Polish Peculiarity and European Contexts (Slavic and Western)*] (2007–2009); *Sparta w literaturze i kulturze polskiej – od okresu staropolskiego do XX wieku. Między recepcją dziedzictwa greckiego a poszukiwaniem narodowej tożsamości* [*Sparta in Polish Literature and Culture – From the Old Polish Period to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Between the Reception of the Greek Legacy and the Search for the National Identity*] (2011–2014). Of great importance for the reception research were team projects implemented under the direction of Professor Alina Nowicka-Jeżowa, concerning Polish humanism in the European context (see, e.g., *Humanizm. Idee, nurty, paradygmaty humanistyczne w kulturze polskiej* [*Humanism. Ideas, Trends, Humanistic Paradigms in Polish Culture*], 2008–2011) and the initiatives by Professor Piotr Wilczek connected with research on the Reformation (see, e.g., *Reformacja w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej i jej europejskie konteksty. Postulaty badawcze*, ed. Piotr Wilczek, in cooperation of Michał Choptiany, Jakub Koryl, Alan S. Ross, IBI AL–Wydawnictwo Naukowe Sub Lupa, Warszawa 2010).



Modern Greek literature and culture in Poland.<sup>29</sup> Professor Witold Wołodkiewicz's original concept led to the establishment of the International School of Roman Law (MSPR).<sup>30</sup> Important achievements also include the Polish, Russian, and German editions of the *Autobiography* and the *Diaries* by the greatest Polish classical philologist, Tadeusz Zieliński.<sup>31</sup>



Plaque commemorating our donors and benefactors from 1991,  
Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Nowy Świat St. 69

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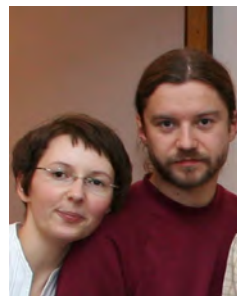
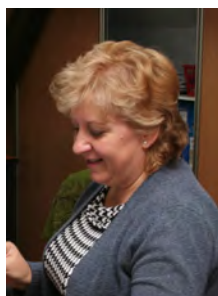
<sup>29</sup> See n. 19.

<sup>30</sup> See the paper by Witold Wołodkiewicz, *Roman Law at OBTA*, p. 91, in the present volume.

<sup>31</sup> See Tadeusz Zieliński, *Autobiografia. Dziennik 1939–1944*, eds. Hanna Geremek, Piotr Mitzner, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa, 2005; Thaddäus Zielinski, *Mein Lebenslauf – Erstausgabe des deutschen Originals – und Tagebuch 1939–1944*, hrsg. und eingeleitet von Jerzy Axer, Alexander Gavrilo und Michael von Albrecht, unter Mitwirkung von Hanna Geremek, Piotr Mitzner, Elżbieta Olechowska und Anatolij Ruban, “Studien zur klassischen Philologie” 167, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main 2012; Ф. Ф. Зелинский, Автобиография, пер. з нем. А. И. Рубана, “Древний Мир и Мы,” vol. 4 (2012), pp. 46–197; idem, Дневник Ф. Ф. Зелинского 1939–1944 гг., ред. Х. Геремек, пер. с польск. В. П. Бударagina, “Древний Мир и Мы,” vol. 4 (2012), pp. 198–220 – the commented texts: Е. Аксер, Тадеуш Зелинский среди чужих, пер. с польск. И. Татаровой, “Древний Мир и Мы,” vol. 4 (2012), pp. 12–23; М. фон Альбрехт, Наводя мосты между культурами и народами: филолог Ф. Ф. Зелинский, “Древний Мир и Мы,” vol. 4 (2012), pp. 24–31; А. К. Гаврилов, Фаддей Францевич Зелинский в контексте русской культуры, “Древний Мир и Мы,” vol. 4 (2012), pp. 32–45.

*Antiquity and We – The Perspective of the Period of Transformation*

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On the subsequent photos from the left: Dean's Proxy for financial-administrative matters Dr. Teresa Kopczyńska with Faculty Dean Prof. Jerzy Axer. Head of the General Secretariat Krystyna Szczytyńska. Dr. Hanna Paulouskaya and Head of the Didactic Secretariat of the Collegium Artes Liberales Dr. Violetta Rączewska. Head of the Library Tomasz Chmielak and employee of the Didactic Secretariat Ilona Szewczyk. Head of the Didactic Secretariat of the Faculty (Mediterranean Studies, Modern Greek Philology, doctoral studies) Bogusława Rokoszewska and IT-specialists: Robert Przybysz, Dr. Krzysztof Miziołek. Dean's Assistant Joanna Majchrzyk and IT-specialist Rafał Łempicki. Secretary of the International PhD Projects programme implemented at the Faculty Magdalena Gorlińska. Proxy for the Chancellor Marzena Jesiotr. IT-specialists: Magdalena Turska and Jakub Miziołek

Care for the memory and legacy of that scholar became the mission of OBTA from the very beginning of its existence.<sup>32</sup> The Centre also tried to cherish the tradition of Polish Classical Philology. Together with the Polish Philological Society (PTF), on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its establishment (1893–1993), OBTA participated in the publishing of the memorial booklet *Antiquorum non immemores...*<sup>33</sup> The Centre began also co-publishing the journal “Eos,”<sup>34</sup> while the *Sąd nad łaciną [Latin on Trial]* opened the door

<sup>32</sup> See Tadeusz Zieliński, *Listy do Stefana Srebrnego*, ed. Grażyna Golik-Szarawarska, in the series “Ludzie i Teksty,” vol. 1, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1997; Tadeusz Zieliński, *Kultura i rewolucja. Publicystyka z lat 1917–1922*, ed. Hanna Geremek, in the series “Ludzie i Teksty,” vol. 2, ed. Jerzy Axer, Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 1999; *Tadeusz Zieliński (1859–1944). W 150 rocznicę urodzin*, ed. Elżbieta Olechowska, IBI AL UW, Warszawa 2011.

<sup>33</sup> See *Antiquorum non immemores... Polskie Towarzystwo Filologiczne 1893–1993*, eds. Jerzy Łanowski, Alicja Szastyńska-Siemon, Polskie Towarzystwo Filologiczne–OBTA, Warszawa–Wrocław 1999.

<sup>34</sup> The journal “Eos,” founded in 1894 by the Rector of the University of Lwów, Professor Ludwik Ćwikliński, is currently edited by Professor Jakub Pigoń, University of Wrocław. OBTA has taken part in co-publishing “Eos” since 2001. OBTA has also gotten involved in the programme initiatives of Dr. Grażyna Czetwertyńska, ones which are aimed, i.a., at maintaining the teaching Latin and ancient culture in schools, and at improving the quality of school-based teaching, along with the continuing education of teaching staff. See, e.g., *Prometheus Programme* (carried out in 1998–2008); Educational Laboratory OBTA UW (functioning from 2000 to 2008); the research project *Akcja społeczna „Szkoła z klasą” jako strategia zmiany szkoły polskiej. Plany, oczekiwania, reakcje [Social Campaign “A School with Class” as the Strategy for Change of the Polish School. Projects, Aspirations, Reactions]* (carried out in 2006–2010). From this project the following publication arose: *Szkoła z klasą. Lekcja*, ed. Grażyna Czetwertyńska, IBI AL UW, Warszawa 2009. Four years later a summary of the many years of research was published: Grażyna Czetwertyńska, *Akcja społeczna „Szkoła z klasą” jako strategia zmiany szkoły polskiej. Plany, oczekiwania, reakcje*, Bookmark, Warszawa 2013. See also: Grażyna Czetwertyńska, *Łacina i kultura antyczna jako składniki systemu edukacyjnego w Polsce współczesnej 1989–2002* (unpublished doctoral thesis); Grażyna Czetwertyńska, Barbara Strycharczyk, in collaboration with Katarzyna Tomaszuk, *Kultura polska na tle cywilizacji śródziemnomorskiej: program ścieżki międzyprzedmiotowej*, Wydawnictwo RTW, Warszawa 1999.

to bold discussions, exceeding beyond the perspective of one discipline.<sup>35</sup>

I would like to mention two people who rendered great service to the development of the ideas of research in OBTA in this matter: Professor Ewa Głębińska (deceased in 2008) and Grzegorz Błachowicz (deceased in 1999).



Prof. Mark O'Connor from Boston College, USA, Archbishop of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church Ihor Isichenko, and Prof. Jerzy Axer at the congress *Rhetoric of Transformation* organized by the International Society for the History of Rhetoric (ISHR) and OBTA, Warsaw 2001

Works within the scope of research on the reception of the classical tradition early became just a part of the academic activity of OBTA. Today, the *Debates of Artes Liberales* series, derived from the spirit of OBTA, created by Professor Jan Kieniewicz and managed with the help of Katarzyna Tomaszuk, who participated from the very beginning in various publishing undertakings of the Centre, constitutes a permanent element

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<sup>35</sup> See [collective work], *Łacina na ławie oskarżonych. Druk z okazji Setnego Zjazdu Polskiego Towarzystwa Filologicznego*, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2004 (book with a CD containing a transcript of the trial).

of the academic life of the Faculty. Another series of debates – *Encounters between Old Cultures* – was for many years successfully held by Doctor Justyna Olko.<sup>36</sup>

OBTA has also meant projects connected with classical theatre and its reception,<sup>37</sup> as well as with research into rhetoric.<sup>38</sup> What was also characteristic for the strategy of research carried out in OBTA was, for example, the development of several-year-long studies on Henryk Sienkiewicz, with roots in the efforts of a group of researchers on Classical Antiquity who worked on the ancient tradition in *Quo Vadis*.<sup>39</sup>

I would like to emphasize here the very deep commitment, reaching beyond the frames of the “faultless fulfillment of academic and teaching obligations,” of the tens of people who met and still meet in this milieu to pursue their passions, ever believing in the sense of joint effort. Throughout everything, our colleagues, with their unique, mutually complementary talents, have assumed co-responsibility for the most important undertakings.

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<sup>36</sup> See the paper by Justyna Olko, *About Cross-Cultural Encounters and Academic Freedom*, p. 165, in the present volume.

<sup>37</sup> See *Siew Dionizosa. Inspiracje Grecji antycznej w teatrze i dramacie XX wieku w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej. Rekonesans*, eds. Jerzy Axer, Zbigniew Osiński, scholarly elaboration Małgorzata Borowska, Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie–OBTA–Ośrodek Badań Twórczości Jerzego Grotowskiego i Poszukiwań Teatralno-Kulturowych, Warszawa 1997; *Scaenica Saravi-Varsoviensia. Beiträge zum antiken Theater und zu seinem Nachleben*, eds. Jerzy Axer, Woldemar Görler, Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 1997.

<sup>38</sup> In 2001, OBTA organized in Warsaw a congress of the International Society for the History of Rhetoric (ISHR), of which I was the president (in the years 1999–2001). Some of the materials concerning the models of reception in the period of transformation were then published as a collection under the title *Rhetoric of Transformation*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2003.

<sup>39</sup> See *Z Rzymu do Rzymu*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA UW-Unia Wydawnicza Verum, Warszawa 2002; *Po co Sienkiewicz? Sienkiewicz a tożsamość narodowa: z kim i przeciw komu? Warszawa–Kiejdany–Łuck–Zbaraż–Beresteczko*, concept and scholarly editing Tadeusz Bujnicki, Jerzy Axer, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007; *Wokół „W pustyni i w puszczy”*. *W stulecie pierwodruku powieści*, concept Jerzy Axer, Tadeusz Bujnicki, Universitas, Kraków 2012; the volume *Mały Sienkiewicz*, eds. Tadeusz Bujnicki, Jerzy Axer, Wydział „Artes Liberales”–Wydawnictwo DiG (in print).

Among them, for almost twenty years, has been Professor Jan Kieniewicz – historian, diplomat, and my best friend ever.<sup>40</sup>



Prof. Jerzy Axer and Prof. Jan Kieniewicz at a Christmas meeting, 2007,  
Conference Room, OBTA, Nowy Świat St. 69

The period of OBTA's independent activity in principle coincided with the period of political transformations in Poland. At the peak of the transformations, the effectiveness of OBTA's use of the classical tradition as a catalyzer of reforms aiming at greater interdisciplinarity of research and a freer system of studying, was difficult to overestimate.

The response that our work encountered outside the boundaries of Poland was confirmed by the fact that the Centre was awarded twice (in 1999 and in 2000) the Hannah Arendt Prize for the best innovative research and educational establishment in East-Central Europe, by the Körber Stiftung from Hamburg and by the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen from Vienna.

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<sup>40</sup> See the paper by Jan Kieniewicz, *OBTA and Civilizational Studies. Experiences and Prospects*, p. 49, in the present volume.

After 2008 it became clear that the role of the new Centre as an internal unit of the Faculty required redefining. This happened not only because the tasks of the circles rooted in OBTA had expanded, but also because the period of Poland's transformations had come to an end.



Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak during the session *Latin on Trial*, March 10, 2004, Conference Room, OBTA, Nowy Świat St. 69

With regard to the past, there were international programmes looking ahead towards the new forms of OBTA's activity, like *Multiple Antiquities – Multiple Modernities* and its continuation – *Classics and Communism* (at present largely owing to the great engagement of Doctor Elżbieta Olechowska).<sup>41</sup> These programmes are built on the foundations of previous

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<sup>41</sup> OBTA Staff took part in the programme *Multiple Antiquities – Multiple Modernities*, the results of which were published in the volume: *Multiple Antiquities – Multiple Modernities. Ancient Histories in Nineteenth Century European Culture*, eds. Gábor Klaniczay, Michael Werner, Otto Gécsér, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt–New York 2011. In the programme continuing this idea *Gnôthi seauton! Classics and Communism* the milieu connected with OBTA co-organized the project and continued it for four years (see *Classics and Communism. Greek and Latin behind the Iron Curtain*, op. cit., see n. 2).

long-time research carried out in cooperation with Hungarian partners on the Latin sources of the history of both national cultures.<sup>42</sup>

When it comes to the future, recognition of the functions of the classical tradition in Polish mass culture in the global context would be of crucial importance. With such conviction, in April 2013, the Council of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” entrusted the post of OBTA’s director to Professor Katarzyna Marciniak, that successful finder of new forms of the reception of Classical Antiquity in the world around us,<sup>43</sup> and who has talked about them with both older and younger listeners, thereby creating our contemporary “we.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> See *Latinitas Hungarica. Łacina w kulturze węgierskiej*, concept and selection of texts by Jerzy Axer, László Szörényi, translated from the Hungarian by Jerzy Snopek, Wydział „Artes Liberales” UW–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2013; *Latinitas Polona*, concept and selection of texts by Jerzy Axer, László Szörényi, in collaboration with Elżbieta Olechowska, ed. Enikő Békés, translated to the Hungarian by Noémi Petneki and Lajos Palfalvi, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Research Centre for Humanities, Institute for Literary Studies–Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Budapest–Warsaw 2014 (in print).

<sup>43</sup> See Katarzyna Marciniak, *Cicero vortit barbare. Przekłady mówcy jako narzędzie manipulacji ideologicznej*, słowo/obraz terytoria, Gdańsk 2008; eadem, *Pro Cicerone poeta. Poezja Marka Tulliusza Cyncerona na przestrzeni stuleci*, IBI AL, Warszawa 2008; eadem, „Ja, August...” *Ostatnia rola Kazimierza Kumanieckiego*, foreword to the uncompleted novel *August* by Kazimierz Kumaniecki, manuscript edition by Anna Zawalska, Instytut Filologii Klasycznej UW, Warszawa 2010, pp. 5–27.

<sup>44</sup> See Katarzyna Marciniak, *Mitologia grecka i rzymska. Bohaterowie ponad czasem*, WSzPWN, Warszawa–Bielsko-Biała 2010; eadem, *Moja pierwsza mitologia*, Wydawnictwo Nasza Księgarnia, Warszawa 2013; see also *Polish Literature for Children & Young Adults Inspired by Classical Antiquity. A Catalogue*, eds. Katarzyna Marciniak, Elżbieta Olechowska, Joanna Kłós, Michał Kucharski, Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” University of Warsaw, Warsaw 2013, e-book available at [http://www.al.uw.edu.pl/omc\\_catalogue](http://www.al.uw.edu.pl/omc_catalogue) (consulted: Nov. 3, 2013). See also the paper by Katarzyna Marciniak, *The Ancient Tradition in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Cui Bono?*, p. 209, in the present volume.





*Jan Kieniewicz*

## **OBTA AND CIVILIZATIONAL STUDIES. EXPERIENCES AND PROSPECTS**

**T**HE SPACE OF THE LIBERAL ARTS emerging in Warsaw since 1992 at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA) is imbued with a certain magic. This conviction arises from the awareness that we have been participating in something that transcends understanding. After all, the Centre was among those dreams deemed “impossible.” Indeed, such was the case with each of its successive embodiments, and the establishment of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” may not necessarily be the last. Once liberated, the arts do not always lead us toward anticipated destinies, which fact does not mean they lead us astray. On the contrary, they liberate us from the existing circumstances, letting us forge our own fate in unpredictable courses of events.

All this needs to be borne in mind on the occasion of the reactivation of OBTA. It should be remembered that the Centre was not merely the outcome of the invention and charisma of Jerzy Axer. He no doubt became the catalyst of the moods and desires of the time – and no doubt encouraged, even incited many people to action. But there was also something in the air beyond us and around us, in times that marked the end of history and the birth of freedom, equality, and independence. I would put it down to the magic of the building. As if that clavichord had not fallen out the

palace window onto the pavement,<sup>1</sup> but was still standing there, and as if Mochnacki, pale as death, were seated at the instrument, “playing chord after chord,”<sup>2</sup> like a “Genius who plays – whilst repelling.”<sup>3</sup> We built the first space for OBTA on the fourth floor and in the attic of the Zamoyski Palace, freeing it, bit by bit, from misery and degradation, and handing it over to the living and to the future. It was the passion of creating, and it was magical, too. So now we need to find that again.

### Artes Liberales

No matter what the beginnings were, by the end of 1990s, artes liberales had become the hallmark and the battle cry of academic circles. And strangely, it was an extremely effective battle cry – despite the fact that artes liberales cut across the grain of the trends then dominant in the Humanities. This was mysterious, too, because the levy en masse of several elderly gentlemen was joined by exceptional young ladies who are now taking over the helm of this adventure. This whole magical atmosphere and huge delight were, it seems to me, connected with our hearkening to that neglected, perhaps almost forgotten realm of experiences which I like to call the “civilizational dimension.”

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<sup>1</sup> From the fourth storey window of the former Andrzej Zamoyski’s townhouse in Warsaw, Nowy Świat Street, on September 19, 1863, was launched a failed bomb attack against general Teodor Berg, who governed the Polish Kingdom on behalf of the Russian tsar (it was during an insurrection called the January Uprising). In retaliation, the building was looted, the belongings of people who lived there were thrown down in the street, among them Fryderyk Chopin’s piano (Chopin died in Paris in 1849).

<sup>2</sup> Maurycy Mochnacki (1803–1834) – literary critic and politician in Poland during the November Uprising (1830–1831), and also an excellent pianist. He emigrated to France and in Metz gave a benefit concert celebrated by the poet Jan Lechoń (1899–1956), one of the founders of the poetic group Skamander, in his poem *Mochnacki* (published in a collection of poems *Karmazynowy poemat*, 1920).

<sup>3</sup> The great Polish poet Cyprian Kamil Norwid (1821–1883) alluded to the 1863 incident in his poem *Fortepian Szopena* [*Chopin’s Piano*] (from his collection of poems *Vademecum*, 1865); see, e.g., the translation into English by Teresa Bałuk, available online: [http://www.babelmatrix.org/works/pl/Norwid,\\_Cyprian\\_Kamil-1821/Fortepian\\_Szopena/en/1593-Chopin\\_s\\_Grand\\_Piano](http://www.babelmatrix.org/works/pl/Norwid,_Cyprian_Kamil-1821/Fortepian_Szopena/en/1593-Chopin_s_Grand_Piano) (consulted: Nov. 26, 2013).

It was not only the classical tradition that had a civilizational dimension, for so too did the *I Rzeczpospolita* (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), in which we wanted to pursue our search.



International conference *Intelligentsia, Empire, and Civilizations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> c.*, June 21, 2007. Inauguration of the Conference Room in the White Villa, Dobra St. 72

The idea to collect and publish the epistolary oeuvre of Jan Dantyszczek had a civilizational dimension,<sup>4</sup> and so did the idea for the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH).<sup>5</sup> But the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition did not announce itself as the Centre for Studies on Civilizations. This was a wise decision. We let the magic work, carried by the idea of *artes liberales*. I will mention two civilization-related circumstances. We wanted to change the university, but it turned out we had to defend its existence. We wanted a turn toward interdisciplinary approaches,

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<sup>4</sup> See the paper by Anna Skolimowska, *The Dantiscus Programme*, p. 139, in the present volume.

<sup>5</sup> See the paper by Robert A. Sucharski, *OBTA UW – An Eastern Countenance*, p. 69, in the present volume.

but we learned that this is not enough for the Polish Humanities to find their place in the world. Both cases are strictly connected with the civilizational dimension of academic autonomy.



Presentation of the volume *Birthday Beasts' Book. Where Human Roads Cross Animal Trails...* From the left: Prof. Jan Kieniewicz, Prof. Oktawiusz Jurewicz, Hanna Jurewicz, Dr. Anna Axer, Prof. Jerzy Axer.

UW's Golden Hall, Kazimierzowski Palace, April 18, 2011

At first, the Centre's aim was not to educate. And yet, since the beginning OBTA has been affiliated with the initiative of the Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities (currently: College of Inter-Area Individual Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, MISH),<sup>6</sup> launching an educational programme which conjoins elite and open teaching. Back then, it all seemed perfectly natural, and attempts were made to change the surrounding reality and make dreams come true – especially young people's dreams. This is yet another argument in favour of the civilizational

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<sup>6</sup> See the UW's MISH website: <http://mish.uw.edu.pl/> (consulted: Oct. 30, 2013).

dimension of artes liberales. It can easily be noticed that each subsequent undertaking, from the very beginning of the Centre's existence, consolidated this dimension. It is enough to have a look at the records of the opening debate of OBTA in 1992.<sup>7</sup> Combining the Mediterranean with the lands between the Baltic and the Black Sea in research, and then in teaching undertakings, was a deliberate effort to identify the former *Rzeczpospolita* (Commonwealth) and contemporary Poland with Europe.

This civilizational perspective explains my connections with the Centre. It is obvious that from the start, the classical tradition was linked to research on the *Rzeczpospolita* as one form of making use of the Roman tradition. It was also treated as a resource with which that very tradition became the inheritance of subsequent generations. Nevertheless, there must have been something more to it, as the former *Rzeczpospolita* was, at best, the subject of my interest rather than the subject of my research. It seems that Jerzy Axer tempted me not so much with the romanticism of the adventure of building something from nothing, as above all with offering me the chance to implement an interdisciplinary project. I have mentioned this in another book,<sup>8</sup> but it needs to be repeated, to make clear how the magic of the place starts to speak. OBTA was not established as a memorial. In 1996, when we settled at Nowy Świat Street 69, staircase B, fourth storey, it seemed that OBTA could be called "immensely modern."<sup>9</sup> In time I came to think that the space of the artes liberales had developed its own voice.<sup>10</sup> That is, having been built on ruins, the Centre became

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<sup>7</sup> See *Tradycje antyczne w kulturze europejskiej – perspektywa polska*, ed. Agnieszka Rabinowska, vol. 1 in the series "Eseje i Studia," ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1995.

<sup>8</sup> See Jan Kieniewicz, *Ekspansja, kolonializm, cywilizacja*, IBI AL–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2008, p. 38.

<sup>9</sup> Quote from Stefan Kieniewicz, who referred to the Institute of History erected on the ruins of Warsaw, see Jan Kieniewicz, *Wyraz na ustach zapomniany. Polskich inteligentów zmagania z Ojczyzną*, Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2012, p. 146.

<sup>10</sup> See the debate *Miejsca mówiące, miejsca milczące*, Dec. 4, 2007, transcription in *Debaty IBI AL*, vol. II 2009, eds. Jan Kieniewicz, Natalia Kotsyba, Marek Szczypek, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, Instytut Badań Interdyscyplinarnych „Artes Liberales” Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2009, pp. 13–49.

a message on creation addressed to those who were ready. This is what favoured the formation of civilizational research here.

Such was the dimension of the aforementioned first debate and vision of the world between Latin and Greek as conceived by Ihor Ševčenko – our unflagging champion.<sup>11</sup> The research carried out at OBTA was cross-sectional, ranging from works on the edition of Renaissance sources to works on the Polish Baroque. Among the subjects of research were both Latin<sup>12</sup> and the literary image of the *Rzeczpospolita*; studies concerning Old Polish virtues and the reconstruction of the Old Polish world view. As I see it, virtually the entire academic activity of OBTA was connected with civilizational issues. The case is similar when it comes to our cycles of studies including, in particular, Mediterranean Studies.<sup>13</sup> It was precisely on these grounds that concepts of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches arose.

### Civilizational Studies

The first step toward civilizational studies was the conference entitled *Discovering Worlds*, held in the autumn of 1996, the results of which were presented in the *Terra Marique* volume.<sup>14</sup> The conference inaugurated our stay on Nowy Świat Street 69 and the beginning of the expansion, which lasted ten years. Thanks to funds obtained from the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP), we created here a realm for research on the farther East and the farthest West. With time, the Laboratory of Interdisciplinary

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<sup>11</sup> See Ihor Ševčenko, *Ukraina między Wschodem a Zachodem. Różne oblicza świata Piotra Mohyły. Polska w dziejach Ukrainy*, vol. 3 in the series “Eseje i Studia,” ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1996.

<sup>12</sup> See publications written as a result of this research: twelve issues of the scholarly journals in the series: “Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty Naukowe” (1995–1999) and the collective monograph: *Łacina jako język elit*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2004.

<sup>13</sup> See the paper by Jerzy Styka, *Mediterranean Studies*, p. 125, in the present volume.

<sup>14</sup> See *Terra Marique. The Cultural Intercourse Between the European Center and Periphery in Modern Time*, ed. Jan Kieniewicz, vol. 5 in the series “Eseje i Studia,” ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 2001.

Research Artes Liberales (LIBAL) and the Laboratory Encounters between Old Cultures sank roots in the White Villa, at Dobra Street 72, taking also there the spirit of a good adventure.



Inauguration of the LIBAL Room in the White Villa, Dobra St. 72. Meeting with the members of the Board of FNP, Jan. 27, 2009. From the left: Dr. Tadeusz Pacholik, Prof. Włodzimierz Bolecki, Prof. Jan Kieniewicz, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Prof. Maciej Żylicz

The Laboratory Encounters between Old Cultures, headed by Justyna Olko, was gradually transformed into the Laboratory Encounters between the Old and New Worlds.<sup>15</sup> Other programmes appeared that focused on the civilizational perspective, like *Philhellenism* by Małgorzata Borowska

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<sup>15</sup> See the following volumes: *Dawne elity. Słowo i gest*, eds. Jerzy Axer, Justyna Olko, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2005; *Wyobrażenie wroga w dawnych kulturach*, eds. Justyna Olko, Patrycja Prządka-Giersz, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007; *Dawne kultury w ideologiach XIX i XX wieku*, ed. Justyna Olko, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007; *Narracja, historia, fikcja. Dawne kultury w historiografii i literaturze*, ed. Łukasz Grützmacher, Wydawnictwo Trio–IBI AL, Warszawa 2009; *Falszertwa i manipulacje w przeszłości i wobec przeszłości*, ed. Justyna Olko, Wydawnictwo Trio–IBI AL, Warszawa 2012.



and Maria Kalinowska,<sup>16</sup> the *Speculum Byzantinum* by Michał Janocha and Irina Tatarova,<sup>17</sup> and the *Balkanica* by Jolanta Sujecka.<sup>18</sup> Comparative studies on the Reformation reveal important issues inside the emerging European civilization.<sup>19</sup> The attempts to present interdisciplinarity as the key to the Humanities point to this civilization in the global context.<sup>20</sup> Equally obvious are the civilizational references of the transdisciplinary research by Ewa Łukaszyk.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, the civilizational perspective is clearly visible in doctoral studies implemented under the direction of Jan Miernowski at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales”: *The Traditions of Mediterranean Humanism and the Challenges of Our Times: The Frontiers of Humanity*, within the scope of the International PhD Projects (MPD) of the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP)<sup>22</sup> – and this is not only due to the central role of the Mediterranean. Rather, what I have in mind are various borderland issues. In this way,

<sup>16</sup> See *Filhellenizm w Polsce. Rekonesans*, eds. Maria Kalinowska, Jarosław Ławski, Małgorzata Borowska, OBTA–Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2007; *Filhellenizm w Polsce. Wybrane tematy*, eds. Małgorzata Borowska, Maria Kalinowska, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, Wydział „Artes Liberales”–Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2012. See also (in the series “Antyk romantyków”) the volume *Hieroglifem pisane dzieje... Starożytny Wschód w wyobraźni romantyków*, eds. Włodzimierz Szturc, Magdalena Bizior-Dombrowska, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>17</sup> See *Bizancjum a renesansy. Dialog kultur, dziedzictwo antyku: tradycja i współczesność*, eds. Michał Janocha, Aleksandra Sulikowska, Irina Tatarova, IBI AL–Campidoglio, Warszawa 2012.

<sup>18</sup> See *Semantyka Rosji na Bałkanach*, ed. Jolanta Sujecka, IBI AL–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2011.

<sup>19</sup> See *Reformacja w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej i jej europejskie konteksty*, ed. Piotr Wilczek, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Sub Lupa, Warszawa 2010.

<sup>20</sup> See *The Humanities Today and the Idea of Interdisciplinary Studies*, ed. Barbara Bokus, Matrix, Warsaw 2011; *Teksty i interpretacje*, eds. Barbara Bokus, Zbigniew Kloch, Lexem, Warszawa 2012.

<sup>21</sup> See Ewa Łukaszyk, *Lieux de culture, espace de civilisation. Continuité / discontinuité dans la Méditerranée*, in *Actes du colloque: Les lieux alternatifs*, Rabat, April 2013 (conference volume in print).

<sup>22</sup> See MPD’s website: <http://www.mpd.ibi.uw.edu.pl/?page=home> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013).

we made Siberia join the Mediterranean world, after America and the Balkans.<sup>23</sup> There were civilizational aspects in the research programmes entitled *Silent Intelligentsia. A Study of Civilizational Oppression*<sup>24</sup> and *Drifting Identity*.<sup>25</sup> A logical consequence of the above was the transfer of my lecture, *Introduction to the History of Civilizations of the East and the West*,<sup>26</sup> to the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (IBI AL) into which OBTA was transformed as a university unit. We moved from issues related to the *Rzeczpospolita* to issues regarding the university’s autonomy which was considered to be the basic element linking the East with the West.<sup>27</sup> Or, perhaps, we were searching for a definition of our own presence beyond the stereotypical division?<sup>28</sup> This is how we arrived

<sup>23</sup> See Piotr Wilczek, *Building Partnerships Between Universities and Communities to Strengthen University Autonomy and Democratic Citizenship: The Artes Liberales Movement at the University of Warsaw*, in *Reimagining Democratic Societies. A New Era of Personal and Social Responsibility*, eds. Sjur Bergan, Ira Harkavy, Hilligje van’t Lands, “Council of Europe Higher Education Series,” No. 18, Council of Europe Publishing, Strasbourg 2013, pp. 211–217. See Jerzy Axer, *Recepcja śródziemnomorskiej tradycji antycznej w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej*, in *Czy Polska leży nad Morzem Śródziemnym?*, eds. Robert Kusek, Joanna Sanetra-Szeliga, Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury, Kraków 2012, pp. 19–81. See also Jan Kieniewicz, Координаты сибирской памяти. Попытка нахождения формы стабилизации дрейфующей идентичности, in *Debaty IBI AL*, vol. IV, ed. Jan Kieniewicz, Instytut Badań Interdyscyplinarnych „Artes Liberales” Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2011, pp. 299–327, online: <http://al.uw.edu.pl/pliki/publikacje/elektroniczne/Debaty%20IBI%20AL%20-%20t%20IV%202011.pdf> (consulted: Nov. 14, 2013).

<sup>24</sup> See *Silent Intelligentsia. A Study of Civilizational Oppression*, ed. Jan Kieniewicz, IBI AL, Warsaw 2009.

<sup>25</sup> See *Inteligencja, imperium i cywilizacje w XIX i XX wieku*, ed. Jan Kieniewicz, IBI AL, Warszawa 2008.

<sup>26</sup> See Jan Kieniewicz, *Wprowadzenie do historii cywilizacji Wschodu i Zachodu*, Dialog, Warszawa 2003.

<sup>27</sup> See *Autonomia uniwersytetu. Jej przyjaciele i wrogowie*, ed. Jan Kieniewicz, Fundacja „Instytut Artes Liberales,” Warszawa 2007 (the Ukrainian edition: Університетська Автономія: її друзі та вороги, ред. Ян Кеневич, Таксон, Київ 2008).

<sup>28</sup> In that way Maria Krzysztof Byrski in the debate on March 6, 2010, published in *Debaty IBI AL*, vol. III 2011, eds. Natalia Kotsyba, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, Instytut Badań Interdyscyplinarnych „Artes Liberales” Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2012, p. 158.

at the *Academia in Public Discourse: Poland-Russia* project, coordinated by Jerzy Axer and Adam Daniel Rotfeld.<sup>29</sup> The nature of the undertaking is above all educational; nevertheless, one should not underestimate its impact on the opening of the artes liberales to completely new experiences. Such manifold confrontations with Russian academic milieux make us realize the substance of the task and its links to the perspective of research on civilizations.



Participants in the session *Coordinates of the Siberian Memory* of the East-Central European School in the Humanities, May 27, 2010, in front of the White Villa – the seat of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Dobra St. 72, Warsaw. In the foreground fourth from the left: Prof. Zoja Morochojewa – co-organizer of the Siberian sessions.

Although Russia had a permanent place in our projects and their implementation, the civilizational aspect was not discernible at first. In fact, in the beginning only occasional initiatives were being undertaken and

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<sup>29</sup> See the project’s website: <http://www.ial.org.pl/msh/pl/poland-russia-program.html> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013).

Russian issues clearly remained in the shadow of more central problems connected with Ukraine and Belarus. Nonetheless, we were all the time accompanied by the thought that the question of the *Rzeczpospolita* could not be considered without Russia and that the Russian thread had to become part of analyses of the issues related to Europe in the East.



Talks about new projects, Conference Room, OBTA, Nowy Świat St. 69, July 18, 2007.  
From the left: Prof. Michał Kleiber, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Prof. Jan Kieniewicz

I have already mentioned this several times, suggesting that the competition to rule the lands between the Baltic and the Black Sea was of a civilizational character.<sup>30</sup>

In 2005, we started cooperating with the Rostov-on-Don State University which, in time, resulted in common initiatives in many fields. In 2006,

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<sup>30</sup> See Jan Kieniewicz, *Rosja i przestrzeń europejska*, in *Problematyka przestrzeni europejskiej*, ed. Antoni Kukliński, Rewasz, Warszawa 1997, pp. 113–123. See also Jan Kieniewicz, *Czy Europa Wschodnia jest możliwa?*, in *eiusdem, Ekspansja, kolonializm, cywilizacja*, IBI AL–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2008, pp. 207–225.

we established cooperation with Siberian universities. Since 2007, our connections with Институт гуманитарных историко-теоретических исследований имени А. В. Поletaева (ИГИТИ) (Poletayev Institute for Theoretical and Historical Studies in the Humanities, IGITI), at the Moscow School of Economics,<sup>31</sup> have not only been fruitful in many aspects but, even more importantly, have brought effects within the scope of comparative studies of civilizations. The initiative by Irina M. Savelieva and Jerzy Axer, supported by Andrei V. Poletayev and myself, should be analyzed in such categories, as it means to collectively publish a study on the presence of Polish and Russian Human Studies in world academic work. Similarly to many other initiatives, this one too had its roots in a session of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH) – specifically, one held in December 2007 in Warsaw, and continued in Moscow the next spring. The study was published in 2010 in Moscow<sup>32</sup> and in 2011 in Warsaw.<sup>33</sup> In December 2012 we discussed the conclusions, planning a new debate on the perspectives of the Humanities.<sup>34</sup> These multifaceted analyses of borderlands strengthened the civilizational dimension of our research: from the issues of encounters, we moved to the revitalization of cultures which collapsed as a result of civilizational confrontations.

In the new perspective, the issue of borderland civilizations has two aspects. First, our aim was to expose the cultural diversification and originality of the borderland areas, especially in the East and in the South. Next, we wished to include within the scope of the artes liberales the Mesoamerican and, subsequently, the Euro-Asian perspectives. Here, at the centre of attention, lies the subject of identity of ethnic communities, small nations, and tribes endangered by ever more aggressive global civilization.

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<sup>31</sup> See IGITI's website: <http://igiti.hse.ru/en/> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013).

<sup>32</sup> See Национальная гуманитарная наука в мировом контексте: опыт России и Польши, ред. Ежи Аксер, Ирина Савельева, Москва 2010.

<sup>33</sup> See *Humanistyka krajowa w kontekście światowym. Doświadczenie Polski i Rosji*, eds. Jerzy Axer, Irina Sawieliewa, Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2011.

<sup>34</sup> The text of the discussion shall be published in volume VIII of the series *Debaty Artes Liberales* (in preparation for print).

These issues are analyzed in comparison to the cases from the territory of Poland or, in a broader sense, the former *Rzeczpospolita*.



HM Rector of the University of Warsaw Katarzyna Chałasińska-Macukow is presented by Prof. Jan Kieniewicz with the volume *Birthday Beasts' Book. Where Human Roads Cross Animal Trails...* In the background, from the left: Prof. Henryk Samsonowicz, Prof. Michał Tymowski, Prof. Włodzimierz Lengauer, Prof. Piotr Wilczek, Prof. Jerzy Styka, Rev. Prof. Marek Starowieyski, Prof. Taras Finikov, Prof. Juliusz Domański, Prof. Jerzy Kolendo. UW's Golden Hall, Kazimierzowski Palace, April 18, 2011

Civilizational aspects became the most visible in the context of the *I Rzeczpospolita*, lying at the core of the interest of the former OBTA. Briefly speaking, the target was to go beyond the rigid frames of the division into the West and the East. The challenge, taken up in 1992, was more than successful, especially in the sense that we managed to initiate even more new tasks. First of all, the Latin, Greek, Catholic, and Orthodox Slavdoms resulted in large-scale research (described in detail in a separate study<sup>35</sup>). What needs emphasizing here is the fact that some other great

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<sup>35</sup> See the paper by Jerzy Axer, *Antiquity and We – The Perspective of the Period of Transformation*, p. 21, in the present volume (esp. p. 33, n. 17, on the series “Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty Naukowe” and “Eseje i Studia”).

initiatives: *From Rome to Rome* (1994–2002),<sup>36</sup> *Latin as the Language of Elites* (1998–2004),<sup>37</sup> *Why Sienkiewicz?* (2003–2007),<sup>38</sup> and *Concerning "In Desert and Wilderness"* (2008–2012),<sup>39</sup> are not the mere aftermath of the fascinating conference-sessions. For in them we can find the evidence of new academic circles taking shape, and this has always been the main ambition of OBTA.



Presentation of the volume *Wokół „W pustyni i w puszczy”*, May 22, 2013, Conference Room, Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” White Villa, Dobra St. 72. From the left: Prof. Jan Kieniewicz, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Prof. Janusz Tazbir, Prof. Tadeusz Bujnicki, via Skype on the screen: Prof. Ryszard Koziółek

<sup>36</sup> See *Z Rzymu do Rzymu*, ed. Jerzy Axer, Verum, Warszawa 2002.

<sup>37</sup> See *Łacina jako język elit*, op. cit.

<sup>38</sup> See *Po co Sienkiewicz? Sienkiewicz a tożsamość narodo- wa: z kim i przeciw komu? Warszawa–Kiejdany–Łuck–Zbaraż–Beresteczko*, concept and scholarly editing Tadeusz Bujnicki, Jerzy Axer, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>39</sup> See *Wokół „W pustyni i w puszczy”*. *W stulecie pierwodruku powieści*, concept Jerzy Axer, Tadeusz Bujnicki, Universitas, Kraków 2012.

Their role in the great objective to reconstruct the world of the former *Rzeczpospolita* is equally important. This was the reality of the civilizational borderland, but also of the original creation of civilizations. It could encompass four levels of the free citizen's identification: domestic/local, regional/ethnic, political/national, and the last one – civic, which I refer to as civilizational.<sup>40</sup>



Prof. Jadwiga Staniszkis and Prof. Jerzy Axer  
talking about the Orange Revolution, Dec. 6, 2004, Warsaw

I call this European civilization in the East “Euro-Sarmatian civilization.”<sup>41</sup> The civilizational dimensions of these ventures should not escape our attention.

<sup>40</sup> See Andrzej Romanowski in the discussion *Kisiel, Chmielnicki, Wiśniowiecki – czy byli dobrymi Ukraińcami?*, in *Po co Sienkiewicz?...*, op. cit., p. 341.

<sup>41</sup> See Jan Kieniewicz, *Pierwsza Rzeczpospolita – przestrzeń wielu kultur czy spotkań cywilizacyjnych?*, in *Rzeczpospolita wielokulturowa – dobrodziejstwo czy obciążenie?*, ed. Jerzy Kłoczowski, Warszawa 2009, pp. 51–60; see also Jan Kieniewicz, *Eurosarmacja. O Europie Środkowej z perspektywy cywilizacyjnej*, “Kwartalnik Historyczny” 4 (2013) (in print).



## Prospects

The presence of civilizational issues in the over twenty-year-long history of OBTA is by no means surprising. It is the result of bringing up the subject of classical tradition and its localization in the space of European borderlands. The tradition shared its lot with borderlands, finding its place in the building of subsequent survival strategies.<sup>42</sup> Reflections on these issues led to further expansion of the civilizational perspective, which is striking in the most recent collection of texts written in the years 2008–2012 in relation to the above-mentioned research initiative taken up on the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the publication of the novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz, *In Desert and Wilderness*.<sup>43</sup>



Małgorzata Wojtyniak – Secretary of the Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Research Artes Liberales (LIBAL)

The civilizational perspective does not only imply the multiplicity of worlds and equivalent consideration of numerous subjects. It is marked by transdisciplinarity as the natural form of crossing borders, by faith in the multiplier effect of collective reflection, by the dialogic mode of discourse.

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<sup>42</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Czas próby. Znaczenie Kazimierza Kumanieckiego dla losów filologii klasycznej w PRL*, "Przegląd Humanistyczny" 6/435 (2012), pp. 3–19.

<sup>43</sup> See n. 39.

Yet another example of solutions of this type, that is, of solutions that are far from stereotypical connotations, is the recently published collection of studies devoted to the humanistic perspective on animal-related issues.<sup>44</sup> In this way, we wished to anticipate the inclusion of Animal Studies into the realm of our interests.<sup>45</sup> Similarly, the project *Our Mythical Childhood... Classics and Children's Literature Between East & West* (2011–2013)<sup>46</sup> opens the perspective to combine the classical tradition with the contemporary shaping of the vision of the world. This is the perspective that we sketched in the debate entitled *Why Do People Need Dwarves?*<sup>47</sup>



Logo of the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation

The prospects for OBTA seem very clear. It is not only going to be a Centre that brings together researchers in various fields, but also – and

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<sup>44</sup> See *Birthday Beasts' Book. Where Human Roads Cross Animal Trails... Cultural Studies in Honour of Jerzy Axer*, ed. Katarzyna Marciniak, IBI AL–Wydawnictwo Wilczyska, Warszawa 2011. See also: <http://www.bbb.al.uw.edu.pl> (consulted: Oct. 15, 2013).

<sup>45</sup> An important conference on that matter: *The Experience of Animality in Culture, Science & Daily Life*, was organized by Jerzy Axer and Szymon Wróbel, Oct. 11–13, 2012.

<sup>46</sup> The conference summarizing the first stage of the project took place in May 23–26, 2013 thanks to the Loeb Classical Library Foundation, the University of Warsaw Fund for Research and with the support by the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation. See also the paper by Katarzyna Marciniak, *The Ancient Tradition in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Cui Bono?*, p. 209, in the present volume.

<sup>47</sup> During the conference *Ludzie i krasnoludki – powinowactwa z wyboru*, Oct. 28, 2009, transcription in *Debaty IBI AL*, vol. II 2009, eds. Jan Kieniewicz, Natalia Kotsyba, Marek Szczypek, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, Instytut Badań Interdyscyplinarnych „*Artes Liberales*” Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2009, pp. 87–139.

above all – one that encourages people to overcome disciplinary barriers. A valuable experience in this scope is the already mentioned International PhD Project (MPD): *The Traditions Of Mediterranean Humanism and the Challenges of Our Times: The Frontiers of Humanity*, from the years 2010–2014.<sup>48</sup>



Christmas gathering at OBTA, 2002. In the foreground from the left: Prof. Oktawiusz Jurewicz, Prof. Leon Tadeusz Błaszczyk, Dr. Anna Axer, Prof. Maria Krzysztof Byrski, Prof. Zbigniew Kloch

This is an example of practicing integral Humanities, with a focus on man. During one of the seminars, I put it like this: “The Humanities are always about the future of man, which he himself is not able to create without reaching to the resources generated in the past. Interdisciplinarity is getting to know the process in practice.”<sup>49</sup> The dialogic character of the

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<sup>48</sup> See n. 22.

<sup>49</sup> *Interdyscyplinarność przypadkowa: o doświadczeniu świata i odkrywaniu przyszłości*, MPD seminar, Feb. 28, 2013, to be published as: Jan Kieniewicz, *Accidental Interdisciplinarity: On Experiencing the World and Discovering the Future*, in *Deбаты Artes Liberales*, vol. VIII, Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Warsaw 2014 (in print).

Humanities also begins here. As an exercise in dialogue, OBTA perfectly fits my vision of the role that we are to play in society.<sup>50</sup>

Finally, the last dimension of the new OBTA will be the Encounter. This encompasses the prospect of opening up to all the dimensions of otherness, both in the events of the past and in the future that we build. In these very dimensions will evolve the cooperation of OBTA as part of the Faculty with the Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Research Artes Liberales (LIBAL).

It seems that the future of OBTA will be marked by the examination of issues in the civilizational perspective – and to such an extent that we will take it for granted.

In the space of the artes liberales, each problem that we raise is revealed in the widest dimension possible, thus becoming an attempt to cross the borders. While pondering the reasons thereof, we should bear in mind that we are embedded in very deep layers of tradition. The classical tradition not only opens the former *Rzeczpospolita*, but is also a pass to a closer legacy, bequeathed in national memory.

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<sup>50</sup> See also Jan Kieniewicz, *Perspektywy polskiego dialogu*, in *Jak poprawić dialog Polaków?*, ed. Jan Szomburg, Instytut Badań nad Gospodarką Rynkową, Gdańsk 2005, pp. 16–24.



## OBTA UW – AN EASTERN COUNTENANCE\*

**I**N 1638, WALERIAN OSTROWSKI – the Deputy Cup-bearer of the Sandomierz region, soldier, translator, and diplomat – published, through Andrzej Piotrowczyk’s printing house in Cracow, his translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. The Polish title of the book reads *Księgi metamorphoseon to jest przemian*. In the panegyric glorifying the translation, inserted at the end of the book, there is a fragment reading as follows (original Latin orthography):

[...]  
Sarmaticis hyemes septem dum vixit in oris:  
Sarmaticè didicit Naso Poëta loqui.  
Lingua rudis fuerat quia tunc ac barbara nostris,  
Sarmaticum nullum Naso reliquit opus. [...]<sup>1</sup>

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\* Some of the materials presented herein have already been used in previous publications (not only authored by me) and, in particular, in the article: Robert A. Sucharski, *Polsko-ukraińska współpraca akademicka na przykładzie Międzynarodowej Szkoły Humanistycznej i Indywidualnych Studiów Humanistycznych UW*, in *Polska – Ukraina. Dziedzictwo i współczesność*. Польща – Україна. Спадщина і сучасність, eds. Roman Drozd, Tadeusz Sucharski, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pomorskiej w Słupsku, Słupsk 2012, pp. 342–347.

<sup>1</sup> Digital edition – scan of the original publication is available on the website of the project by the Jagiellonian University: *Biblioteka Literatury Staropolskiej i Nowołacińskiej*, <http://neolatina.bj.uj.edu.pl/page/show/id/5958.html> (consulted: Nov. 17, 2012).

[...]  
Having lived in the Sarmatian land for seven winters,  
Naso the Poet learnt their tongue.  
But as our language was rude and barbarian,  
He wrote not a single work here. [...]

The poem constitutes an obvious reference to the well-known, especially in Poland, confession of Ovid made once in *Tristia* (V 12, 58) and again in *Epistulae ex Ponto* (III 2, 40):

[...]  
nam didici Getice Sarmaticeque loqui. [...]<sup>2</sup>  
[...]  
so I have learnt to speak Getic and Sarmatian. [...]

In fact, the panegyric proves the strong belief, so common in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, concerning the “Sarmatian” or “Polish” identity of Ovid, who weaned himself from speaking Latin and switched to Polish: thus, the only reason why there are no works written by the Sulmonian poet in Polish is the immaturity of the then Polish language.

In the *Herbarz wielu domow Korony Polskiej y W. X. Litewskiego... [A Roll of Arms of Many Houses of the Polish Crown & the Great Duchy of Lithuania...]*<sup>3</sup> published in 1757 by the printing house of Jan Kanty in Cracow, Stanisław Duńczewski talks about Jan Zamoyski, the hetman (original Polish and Latin orthography):

[...] Ex promptu łaćińskimi wierszami, kiedy chćiał, gadał; iáko powracáiąc z wiktoryą Siedmiogrodzką, Multańską y Wołoską, trafiwszy ná Owidową gorę, y pod nią ieźioro, rzekł do Maćieią Pisko-

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<sup>2</sup> Latin quotations after the version published on the digital carrier issued by the Packard Humanities Institute: PHI CD 5.3.

<sup>3</sup> Digital edition – scan of the original publication (format DjVu) is available on the website of the Kujawsko-Pomorska Digital Library, <http://kpbc.umk.pl/dlibra/plain-content?id=38471> (consulted: Nov. 17, 2012).

rzewskiego, Kawálera pięknęgo dowćipu, ktorego miał ná tę czas z sobą:

Naso & Piskoreus Geticas venere sub oras  
Pænæ illum, hunc traxit nexus amicitiaē. [...] <sup>4</sup>

[...] He spoke Latin verses whenever he wanted, ex promptu; as when returning victorious from Transylvania, Muntenia & Wallachia, he encountered the Ovidian Mountain and at the foot of the mountain a lake, he said to Maciej Piskorzewski, a knight of considerable wit who at the time accompanied him:

Naso and Pisorius arrived in the Getic land,  
The latter led by friendship, the first one – not. [...]

Ovidova Hora [Ovidian Mountain] is located near Davyd-Haradok in Volhynia, within the territory of present-day Ukraine.

The turning point of 1989 in Poland, along with the subsequent collapse of the USSR, opened the doors to academic cooperation as could only be dreamt of in the times when dialectical materialism dominated. The nations of Central and Eastern Europe, liberated from the Soviet regime, were now able to go back to their roots, attend to their heritage, and speak freely of the problems of identity, culture, language, confession... Thus, when the idea arose to establish an academic centre dedicated to the problems of classical heritage in Poland within the framework of the University of Warsaw, it was obvious that it was impossible to separate Poland from its eastern neighbours, the countries and nations only recently liberated from the USSR, and which are the co-equal heirs to the legacy of the *I Rzeczpospolita* (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) of the Jagiellonians and the elective kings. Therefore, in the natural course of events, the research centre established through the decision of the Senate of the University of Warsaw (dated December 18, 1991) took the name of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe at the University of Warsaw (OBTA UW). The task to manage the Centre was assumed by the creator of the idea and its spiritus movens, Professor

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<sup>4</sup> Ibidem, p. 232.



Jerzy Axer, classical philologist – Latinist, Neo-Latinist, and expert in the field of theatre.

As early as during the first few years of the Centre's activity, numerous works were published which documented the cooperation between Polish scholars and their partners from the neighbouring eastern countries. The first volume of the "Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty Naukowe" ["Latin in Poland. Research Bulletins"] series, entitled *Między Slavia Latina i Slavia Orthodoxa* [*Between Slavia Latina and Slavia Orthodoxa*], opened with an introduction by the Director of OBTA. It reads as follows:

The interdisciplinary, long-term programme of research aims at the creation of an extensive collection of documents and literary texts written in Latin, the reading of which might restore to national remembrance the reserves of experiences that are now forgotten to a large extent and, at the same time, introduce into international circulation knowledge on the eastern peripheries of the historically shaped Latin-speaking community of the European elites. Nevertheless, such an aim can only be pursued effectively if Polish Latinity is viewed in the broad context of the Latinity of the entire region; and one must not for a moment forget the unique dialogue and confrontation between the Latin element and the world of the Byzantine tradition.<sup>5</sup>

The research programme sketched in this manner is reflected not only in subsequent volumes of the "Latin in Poland. Zeszyty Naukowe" ["Latin in Poland. Research Bulletins"] series, but also in another, parallel series, "Eseje i Studia" ["Essays and Studies"]. The mid-1990s brought, i.a., the following publications: Thomas M. Conley, *Byzantine Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Poland*, OBTA, Warsaw 1994; Ihor Ševčenko, *Ukraina między Wschodem a Zachodem. Różne oblicza świata Piotra Mohyły*. Pol-

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<sup>5</sup> Jerzy Axer, *Wstęp*, in *Łacina w Polsce. Zeszyty 1–2: Między Slavia Latina i Slavia Orthodoxa*, ed. Jerzy Axer, OBTA, Warszawa 1995, pp. 7–8.

ska w dziejach Ukrainy [*Ukraine between East and West. The Many Worlds of Petro Mohyla. Poland in Ukrainian History*], OBTA, Warszawa 1996.<sup>6</sup>

The scholarly milieu of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition reintroduced to the world of research the long-forgotten, hand-written *Słownik polsko-cerkiewnosłowiańsko-ukraiński* [*Polish-Church Slavonic-Ukrainian Dictionary*] by Teodor Witwicki (1783–1861). This work, elaborated by Josyp Dzendzelivskij, was edited and published by Professor Janusz Rieger.<sup>7</sup> And it is the name of Professor Rieger, as its originator, that the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH) is connected with. The School is the most important educational programme of OBTA in the context of academic cooperation between Poland and its eastern neighbours.

### **Establishment of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH)**

The East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH) was established in 1996 at the initiative of Polish and Ukrainian scholars. In response to the idea of Professor Rieger, its curriculum was elaborated by Professor Axer in cooperation with Ukrainian academics from the United States (including Professor Roman Szporluk and Professor Ihor Ševčenko), as well as with representatives of the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. The persons in charge of the Ukrainian part of the curriculum (its supplementation and coordination) were Professors: Janusz Rieger (OBTA UW), Yaroslav Isaevych (National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine), Nataliya Yakovenko (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, OBTA UW), and Ola Hnatiuk (OBTA UW). Professors Elżbieta Smułkowa (OBTA UW) and Anatoly Mikhailov (The European Human-

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<sup>6</sup> For the complete list of the volumes published in both series, see the paper by Jerzy Axer, *Antiquity and We – The Perspective of the Period of Transformation*, esp. p. 33, n. 17, in the present volume.

<sup>7</sup> See *Słownik polsko-cerkiewnosłowiańsko-ukraiński Teodora Witwickiego z połowy XIX wieku*, redacted and prepared for publication by Josyp Dzendzeliwski [Dzendzelivskij], ed. Janusz Rieger, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, Warszawa 1997.

ties University in Minsk), on the other hand, participated in the elaboration of the Belarusian part of the curriculum.



*Session Polish and Ukrainian Dialectology,  
April 14–23, 2004, OBTA, Nowy Świat St. 69.*

From the left: Prof. Halina Karaś, Prof. Janusz Rieger, Prof. Jerzy Axer

The management body of MSH was composed of Professors: Jerzy Axer (Director of OBTA), Ivan Vakarchuk (Rector of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv), Reverend Eparch Borys Gudziak (Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv), and Nataliya Yakovenko (National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, OBTA UW), with the participation of Professors: Anatoly Mikhailov (The European Humanities University in Minsk), Jūratė Kiaupienė (Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas), and, starting 2001, Lyudmila Rychkova (Vice-Rector of the Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno). The Executive Committee of MSH was composed

of Professor Jerzy Axer – programme director, and myself – executive officer. The Committee cooperated with Professor Janusz Rieger.

### **Objectives of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH)**

The most prominent long-term ideas behind the foundation of MSH were as follows:

1. to create a network of cooperating academic institutions across the region of Central and Eastern Europe;
2. to popularize contemporary theories and methodologies of the Humanities and – first of all – to support the new generation of researchers in the academic fields which were particularly neglected in the countries of the region (in particular, in the USSR), although crucial for the revival of the Humanities;
3. and, as a result, to create an international and interdisciplinary community capable of effective scholarly cooperation, and thus of eliminating the existing vacuum that risks becoming filled with an ideology of primitive nationalism and ethnocentric delusions.

These premises entailed educating specialists regarding the common history of the region, issues connected with cultural heritage, linguistics, translation studies, editorial techniques, archive studies, classical languages, etc. They also entailed standing up to the focus on teaching law, economics, management and business, and applied social sciences, each of which was so popular in the 1990s. MSH was one of the few international programmes addressed to humanists which, additionally, paid attention to the significance of the Mediterranean tradition in the region. The School, managed by the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition, emphasized the need for humanistic education, mainly because it is this and only this very type of education that consolidates the intellectual communities which would lead civil society and play a particularly important role in promoting the national tradition and developing historical memory, thus shaping public opinion in the countries of the region.

MSH was targeted mainly at young academic staff, including doctoral students and persons working on postdoctoral theses (“habilitacja”). The participants included people selected in a contest from among candidates coming from all the countries of Eastern and Central Europe. These were:

- young academic researchers from universities and academies who had regular classes with students or were in didactic training;
- researchers from archives and libraries, who cooperated with universities and academies and held classes;



Opening of the MSH branch at the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, June 26, 2002. From the left: Prof. Ola Hnatiuk, HM Rector and Minister for Education of Ukraine Prof. Ivan Vakarchuk, Prof. Robert A. Sucharski

- students of years 4 and 5 of the universities and academies which recognized MSH courses as part of their students’ curricula;
- as an exception – students of earlier years, upon a special request of rectors (depending on the pending reforms of the curricula of studies in liberal arts at a given university or academy);

- as an exception – researchers from the USA and Western Europe, specializing in Eastern and Central Europe issues.



Signing of the collaboration agreement with the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, July 5, 2001. From the left in the first row: Vice-Rector of the University of Lviv Prof. Maria Zubrycka, from the right in the second row: Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Prof. Ola Hnatiuk, Prof. Barbara Bokus

### **Activity of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH)**

The activity of MSH in the years 1996–2008 was divided into four stages:

- I. 1996 – The Pilot Programme: Lviv–Warsaw;
- II. 1996/1997–1998/1999 – The Model Programme;
- III. 1999/2000–2004/2005 – The Five-Year Programme;
- IV. 2005/2006–2007/2008 – The Continuation.

I. 1996 – The Pilot Programme: Lviv–Warsaw (supported by the Stefan Batory Foundation)

The most prominent target of this stage of the School’s operation was to establish contacts, gather lecturers, and test the elements of the teaching curriculum. The Pilot Programme was also aimed at testing the capabilities for organizing and holding sessions. The training sessions were organized in Lviv and Warsaw (four weeks in Ukraine, nine weeks in Poland) and were attended by seventy-five students.



Session *Translatorium*, May 25–June 15, 2003, Warsaw. From the left: Dr. Adam Pomorski, Andriej Chadanowicz, Prof. Robert A. Sucharski, Head of the General Secretariat of OBTA/IBI AL/FAL Krystyna Szczytyńska, Prof. Ola Hnatiuk

Half of the participants came from Ukraine, while the remaining ones were from Poland, Belarus, Moldova, and Bulgaria. Lectures were given by professors from Poland (thirty people), former USSR countries (thirteen people), the US, Italy, and Germany (five people in total). There were ten interdisciplinary seminars and five weekly seminars to attend, devoted to one issue. The subjects raised concerned history, anthropology, cultural studies, and ethnography. Additionally, the Pilot Programme included auxiliary sciences courses and classical language courses.

II. 1996/1997–1998/1999 – The Model Programme (supported by the Stefan Batory Foundation)

The aim of this stage was to elaborate and test the comprehensive curriculum offered by MSH, to establish the principles of international co-operation and to determine the frameworks of various types of sessions, in order to develop long-term cycles of the studies and the principles of further development. The stage included seven sessions organized in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, Warsaw, Cracow, Kyiv and, once again, in Warsaw (eighteen weeks in total), attended by students from Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Russia, Bulgaria, and Lithuania (two hundred and fifty participants). The main Warsaw session was attended by sixty-one students (80% from outside Poland) with grants and by a group of unenrolled students. The offer included: tutor's care, six parallel single-subject seminars on methodology and six parallel workshops, classical language classes, auxiliary sciences courses, history courses, and computer courses. The basic subject matter of the seminars included philology, history, linguistics, ethnography, classical tradition (history of ideas), and history of art. Twenty-six professors ensured tutorial care and lectures were given by thirty people from Poland (researchers from the University of Warsaw, the Jagiellonian University, the University of Wrocław, and the Polish Academy of Sciences) and twelve people from Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania, and the US.

The Cracow-Lviv summer school was held in September 1999. It was attended by thirty-two participants from Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland. The main question of the session regarded the identity of Cracow and Lviv. The answer was sought through various humanistic methodologies (history of art, sociology, ethnography, literary studies, and religious studies).

III. 1999/2000–2004/2005 – The Five-Year Programme (financed mainly by the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation from the grant awarded by the Open Society Institute Higher Education Support Program – OSI HESP)

The establishment, in November 1997 – at the initiative of Professor Jerzy Axer and Professor Jan Kieniewicz – of the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute



Foundation (FIAL) aiming to “support the development of new educational methods (including experimental ones), especially within the area of «non-applied humanities», to contribute to the organization and development of academic, research, and educational units in this scope, mainly at the University of Warsaw, to support the investigation and retaining of the Mediterranean heritage, with particular focus on Hellenistic and Latin traditions in Eastern and Central Europe”<sup>8</sup> and – first of all – the efficient activity of FIAL, which since 1999 has provided funds for didactic experiments, constituted a new incentive to the development of MSH.



Session *National, European, Local Identity*, Dec. 3–13, 2003, UW’s Senate Hall.  
From the left: Prof. Frank Sysyn, Prof. Yaroslav Hrytsak, Prof. Jerzy Axer, HM Rector of the Ukrainian Catholic University in Lviv, Reverend Eparch Prof. Borys Gudziak, Prof. Robert A. Sucharski

The basic forms of education in this part of the programme were that of seminar groups which worked under the supervision of outstanding

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<sup>8</sup> The fragment of the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation’s Statute, see <http://www.ial.org.pl/StatutFIAL.pdf> (consulted: Oct. 29, 2013).

scholars. The programme encompassed the full spectrum of liberal arts, divided into the following blocks:

- traditions of Greek, Roman, and Byzantine culture in Central and Eastern Europe, with special attention devoted to common heritage;
- theory of literature, philology: Polish, Ukrainian, Belarusian; other philologies of the region;
- linguistics: Polish, Ukrainian, Belarusian, elements of Lithuanian linguistics, comparative and contrastive studies in Slavic linguistics;
- classical philology;
- archive studies and textual criticism;
- history of the region between the 16<sup>th</sup> and the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (nations, countries, churches, national minorities, and religious pluralism; Catholicism, the Orthodox Church, Protestantism, Judaism);
- history or art;
- ethnography of the region, cultural studies with elements of philosophy;
- sociology;
- language courses: Greek, Latin, Polish, Ukrainian, Belarusian, and other;
- palaeography;
- computer courses within the scope of liberal arts;
- regional studies.

The list of the sessions of MSH held in the period is accessible on the School's website.<sup>9</sup>

IV. 2005/2006–2007/2008 – The Continuation (partially financed by the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation from the grant awarded by the Open Society Institute Higher Education Support Program – OSI HESP)

This stage was aimed at the continuation and development of the hitherto East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH), founded as a

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<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.ial.org.pl/msh/pl/sesje-msh.html> (consulted: Oct. 29, 2013).

project of cooperation between OBTA and leading universities of Poland, Ukraine, and Belarus. MSH turned out to be a very effective system of training young staff. In the academic years 2005/2006, 2006/2007, and 2007/2008, the main target of the programme was to prepare new academic staff from outside of the European Union to participate in the European Higher Education Area, the main purpose of the Bologna Process.

The years 1999–2008 mark the period of the most dynamic development of MSH. More than one hundred and twenty sessions were organized in the period (the list is accessible online<sup>10</sup>); some of them were known as “combined sessions,” during which MSH participants met with the participants of another experimental programme by OBTA, the »Artes Liberales« Academy (AAL).<sup>11</sup> The sessions offered a unique opportunity for contact between Polish students and young Ukrainians, Belarusians, and Russians, the majority of whom were already carrying out academic research.

Several session series of particular importance were organized, ones which enabled young researchers from the East to get to know and discuss new methodologies in research and teaching. The series encompassed sessions devoted to:

- the classical tradition and ancient heritage;
- the history of the *I Rzeczpospolita* (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth);
- translation problems;
- linguistics;
- problems of identity (with special focus on Belarus and Siberia);
- links between philosophy and experimental sciences;
- Roman law.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>11</sup> Within the framework of the »Artes Liberales« Academy, the inter-faculty ideas of studies in the humanities were transplanted to the inter-university ground, see AAL's website: <http://www.aal.edu.pl/> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013).

In the years 1999–2008, the sessions of MSH were held in Lviv, Warsaw (along with Orońsko, Perkoz, Stężyca, Miętno, Supraśl),<sup>12</sup> Minsk, Grodno, Mazyr, Białystok, Lublin, Cieszyn, Poznań and Gniezno, Kazimierz, Kiejdany, Wrocław and Horki near Mogilev, Cracow, Vilnius, Kaunas, Kyiv, Toruń, Katowice, Rome, and Rostov-on-Don – attended by more than 3,000 participants, calculated separately for each session, which means that one person could participate in more than one session.



Session *Borderland: Belarus and its Neighbours*, June 19–July 3, 2005, Supraśl.  
Prof. Elżbieta Smułkowa among the session’s participants (in the foreground, fourth from the right)

Half of the participants came from Ukraine, while others were from Poland, Belarus, Russia, and Lithuania. The sessions were also attended by Italians, Czechs, Germans, Montenegrins, Croatians, Americans, Hungarians, Slovaks, Moldovans, Austrians, Romanians, and Bulgarians.

The entire programme included more than 20,000 teaching hours, of which the students built their cycle of studies during the sessions. Classes

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<sup>12</sup> The names in brackets are those of cities where the “off-site” part of the session was held, if off-site meetings were part of a given session.

were given by more than 2,500 lecturers (calculated separately for each session, which means that one person could lecture at more than one session) from many countries, including, Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Lithuania, Italy, the US, Hungary, and Germany. Under the banner of MSH, lectures were also given by professors from Spain, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, the Republic of South Africa, Canada, Georgia, France, Sweden, Slovakia, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, the Netherlands, Estonia, Norway, Austria, the United Kingdom, Macedonia, and Israel.



Session *Small Nations and Ethnic Groups – Tatars*, Oct. 17–27, 2004. The session’s participants at the mosque in Kruszyńiany, eastern Poland

As stated by Professor Włodzimierz Mędrzecki (historian at both the Polish Academy of Sciences and the University of Warsaw), for a long time in charge of the MSH “historical module,” the School’s significance and role can be presented in the form of the following list:

- the School contributed to the creation of international intellectual circles;
- the School played an important role in the process of modernization of Ukrainian higher education;
- the School contributed to the academic development and the shaping of the intellectual silhouette of a large group of young researchers and academic educators;
- the School played an important role as the organizer of conferences and discussions and as the inspirer of cutting-edge academic projects within the broadly-defined Humanities.

It should be remembered that MSH was also the place of a debate on the role and social function of the University per se, thus raising discussions on the role of academic autonomy in the countries of Eastern Europe.

Although MSH was above all an educational programme, it also contributed to the elaboration of several strictly academic publications (apart from the ones already quoted herein):

- Ola Hnatiuk, *Pożegnanie z imperium. Ukraińskie dyskusje o tożsamości* [Farewell to Empire. Ukrainian Identity Debates], Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie–Skołodowskiej, Lublin 2003;
- *Po co Sienkiewicz? Sienkiewicz a tożsamość narodowa: z kim i przeciw komu? Warszawa–Kiejdany–Łuck–Zbaraż–Beresteczko* [Why Sienkiewicz? Sienkiewicz and National Identity: With Whom and against Whom? Warszawa–Kiejdany–Łuck–Zbaraż–Beresteczko], concept and scholarly editing Tadeusz Bujnicki, Jerzy Axer, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007;
- *Autonomia uniwersytetu. Jej przyjaciele i wrogowie* [The Autonomy of the University: Its Friends and Enemies], ed. Jan Kieniewicz, Fundacja „Instytut Artes Liberales,” Warszawa 2007; in 2008 it was also printed in Ukrainian: Університетська Автономія: її друзі та вороги, ред. Ян Кеневіч, Таксон, Київ 2008;
- Філософські проблеми науки – *Filozoficzne problemy nauki* [Philosophical Problems in Science], eds. Iwan Wakarczuk, Jacek Jadański, Львівський Національний Університет імені Івана Франка

- ka–Uniwersytet Warszawski, Warszawa 2008;  
– *Brasławszczyzna. Pamięć i współczesność* [*Braslawshire. Memory and the Present*], vols. I–II, ed. Elżbieta Smulek, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2009–2011.

There were also other academic, educational, and didactic projects connected with the School, either run or co-run by OBTA, and targeted at participants from countries to the east of Poland. Among the most important ones was the project of transplantation of the idea of Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities (MISH).<sup>13</sup> This type of studies, originated at the University of Warsaw, was enthusiastically received in other leading Polish universities and served as a model for the study programmes opened in Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia.



International debate *The Politics of History: Russian and Polish Versions*, May 11–13, 2013, Moscow. From the left: Prof. Adam D. Rotfeld, Prof. Irina Savelieva, Prof. Jan Kieniewicz, Irina Shcherbakova

The first College of Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities to the east of Poland was established in Lviv, as the common initiative of two Ukrainian universities, that is, of the Ivan Franko National University

<sup>13</sup> See the UW's MISH website: <http://www.mish.uw.edu.pl/> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013).

of Lviv and the Ukrainian Catholic University. Established in 2002, it admitted its first students for academic year 2002/2003. The College in Kyiv, founded in 2004 at the National University of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, organized the first enrollment for the year 2006/2007. Finally, talks held from 2008 resulted in the establishment of the third unit of this kind, in the Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University. The College in Kyiv was closed in time, while the other Colleges are facing the problem of declining interest. This is probably connected with the fact that, in accordance with the higher education law applicable in Ukraine, Ukrainian MISH students cannot decrease the number of obligatory course hours (within the scope of special “curriculum minima” used in Poland), having to attend all courses which, following the assumption that there are at least three mandatory courses embedded in three different liberal arts methodologies, means considerable difficulty.

When it comes to the activity of the Belarusian structures of MISH founded at two universities: the Belarusian State University in Minsk and the Yanka Kupala State University of Grodno, they were suspended for political reasons, and then closed. The structure of MISH in Rostov-on-Don, on the other hand, is developing very well (it is the only structure of this kind still active in Russia as of the editing of the article: November 2013). It was established in 2005 and admitted its first students in the year 2006/2007. Now, it is the second (after the University of Warsaw) such unit in terms of the number of students.

There was also an introductory programme for candidates to the Interdisciplinary Doctoral Studies (2005–2008) connected with MSH. Due to its unique character (i.e., being targeted exclusively at doctoral students), the programme was founded within the framework of the aforementioned »Artes Liberales« Academy (AAL), i.e., individual studies in the humanities transplanted on the inter-university level.<sup>14</sup> The introductory programme did not have the form of doctoral studies as stipulated in the Act (Polish Law on Higher Education). It aimed to provide substantive aid to its participants in their work on doctoral theses, the subjects of

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<sup>14</sup> See n. 11.



which reached beyond the narrow academic specializations. In particular, the target of the programme was to offer aid in the elaboration of interdisciplinary doctoral theses, written with the help of two tutors: one from the native country and one from Poland. Moreover, it facilitated access to Polish libraries and archives and enabled contacts with interesting academic circles in Poland as well as with outstanding scholars. It should be emphasized that participation in the programme would make it easier to qualify for doctoral studies (co-)run by OBTA (the graduates were granted additional scores – in accordance with the rules of qualification), whether to the Networked Transdisciplinary Doctoral Studies (NTDS) organized by OBTA together with the Faculty of History of the University of Warsaw<sup>15</sup> or to doctoral studies in the field of cultural studies and literary studies, continued by OBTA/IBI AL/FAL since 2008.<sup>16</sup>

Two scholarship programmes in place at OBTA were also closely connected with MSH. They were addressed to young researchers from countries to the east of Poland. The first one was financed by the Józef Mianowski Fund – A Foundation for the Promotion of Science, while funds for the other one were awarded by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. Within both programmes (the latter is still being implemented), the participants come to Poland for at least one month, to work on their own academic project. The participants of each of the twin programmes were connected with the activity of MSH, as this is the mandatory condition to be satisfied by students applying for the scholarship from the Józef Mianowski Fund and one of the criteria for scholarships granted by the Ministry.

### **Prospects**

The transformation of OBTA into the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (IBI AL) of the University of Warsaw (January 23, 2008) and, then, into the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (FAL) of the University of

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<sup>15</sup> See, e.g., one of the “paths” available within the framework of NTDS: <http://www.isd.al.uw.edu.pl/searching-en.php> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013).

<sup>16</sup> See the doctoral studies’ website: <http://sd.al.uw.edu.pl/> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013).

Warsaw (October 1, 2012) did not mean that the activity of MSH had come to an end, thus entailing the end of academic, didactic, and educational cooperation with academic institutions of countries to the east of Poland. Started mainly as cooperation with Ukrainian institutions, the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH) transformed in 2009 into the East-European School in the Humanities (MSH EW). It expanded geographically but did not forget its roots; e.g., cooperation with academic institutions of the Russian Federation is worth mentioning, including, in particular, the programme of the years 2011-2013, *Academia in Public Discourse: Poland–Russia* (funded mainly by the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation from the grant by the Open Society Institute, New York).<sup>17</sup> And this is the direction of development that the School wishes to maintain.

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Among the key elements of the mission of OBTA, included in its regulations, was the educational programme targeted at educating humanistic academic staff from Poland and from countries to the east of Poland. The programme, in the form of the East-Central European School in the Humanities, became the first permanent educational programme offered abroad by the Centre. Without the School, OBTA would never be able to perform its predominant function, as implied by its name, and its history would surely have taken a different turn.

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<sup>17</sup> See the programme’s website: <http://www.ial.org.pl/msh/pl/poland-russia-program.html> (consulted: Oct. 28, 2013). See also the paper by Jan Kieniewicz, *OBTA and Civilizational Studies. Experiences and Prospects*, p. 49, in the present volume.



## ROMAN LAW AT OBTA

**A**S A LECTURER of many years' standing at the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Warsaw, I was appointed to the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA), where I performed the function of Deputy Director (until 2002) and the Head of the Academic Council (2002–2005). I have been carrying out research and holding monograph courses for students of the College of Inter-Area Individual Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences (until 2013 – the College of Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities) on the history of European legal culture and the significance of Roman law for its development. After the establishment of Mediterranean Studies, I started lecturing on the essentials of Roman law. The introduction of this course into the curriculum resulted from the strong conviction as to the importance of knowledge on the core issues related to Roman law.

Roman law played a significant role not only in the classical period – in particular, at the close of the Republic and during the Principate, when Rome affected the fates of countries and peoples of the Mediterranean through its law – but also in the Dominate, when the centre of gravity of ancient Rome's influence moved to the eastern part of the Empire. The codification of Justinian (6<sup>th</sup> century) became the grounds for the reception of Roman law in Byzantium, in the countries of the East remaining under the influence of Byzantium, as well as in Western European countries, both in the Middle Ages and the modern period.

In the USSR and its satellite People's Republics, where the ideology of historical materialism reigned, teaching and researching Roman law were eliminated or significantly curtailed. After the collapse of "real socialism" and the transformations in the former USSR, the situation changed and, as a result, the push to bring the teaching of Roman law back to life gathered steam.



Session of MSPR, Sept. 26, 2003, OBTA, Nowy Świat St. 69. From the left: Prof. Alessandro Corbino, Prof. Francesco Musumeci, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz, Prof. Carla Masi Doria, Prof. Cosimo Cascione

Therefore, in 2001, the International School of Roman Law for Eastern and Central Europe (MSPR) was established at OBTA, as part of the course offering of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See the paper by Robert A. Sucharski: *OBTA UW – An Eastern Countenance*, p. 69, in the present volume.

*In principio...*

The establishment of the International School of Roman Law was connected with efforts to restore the teaching of Roman law in the former communist countries, which lacked highly specialized lecturers and researchers. Although universities in the former USSR offered philological and historical studies of ancient Rome, Roman law studies and lectures at faculties of law – even if introduced – were treated ideologically and superficially. They did not give students the opportunity to draw conclusions as to the significance of Roman law for the creation of contemporary legal culture. Its elements were (and still are) taught in vestigial form only, by teachers of general state history, law theoreticians, or civil law experts rather than by specialists. Thus, in the countries of the former USSR and in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe there was a huge demand for restoring Roman law studies. The situation was quite different in Poland, however, as there were numerous scholars of Roman law at Polish universities.

The push to revive the teaching and study of Roman law was made quite apparent during several international meetings – namely: the 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference in Moscow, organized in November 1997 by the Centre of Roman Law Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Faculty of Law at Lomonosov Moscow State University; the 7<sup>th</sup> Colloquium of Roman Law Experts from Eastern and Central Europe and from Italy, held in Rome in December 1998 by Centro per gli Studi su Diritto Romano e Sistemi Giuridici del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Sapienza – Università di Roma; the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference in Moscow and Saint Petersburg, organized in May 2000 by the Centre of Roman Law Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences and the Faculty of Law at the Lomonosov Moscow State University; the international conference held in November 2000 by the Far Eastern University in Vladivostok together with the Italian Centro per gli Studi su Diritto Romano e Sistemi Giuridici del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Sapienza – Università di Roma. The meetings were attended by lecturers from universities and law schools in China, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Ukraine, and former Yugoslavian republics.

During the meetings, I called for the founding of the International School of Roman Law (*Scuola di Formazione nel Diritto Romano, MSPR*) for young and middle-aged Roman law lecturers at universities in the countries of the former USSR and in Eastern and Central Europe. My proposal met with huge interest. The aim of the School was to enable contacts between Roman law experts from the former USSR, their colleagues from other Eastern and Central European countries (mainly Poland), and representatives of Roman law experts from Western Europe (mainly Italian). The task of the School was to provide aid in the shaping of Roman law academic staff in the countries which sought the revival of teaching in the subject, in particular, in the former USSR and Eastern and Central Europe.<sup>2</sup>

My contacts with the Italian scholars of Roman law – in particular, with *Centro per gli Studi su Diritto Romano e Sistemi Giuridici del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche, Sapienza – Università di Roma*, run by Professor Pierangelo Catalano from *Sapienza – Università di Roma*, with *Consorzio Interuniversitario Gérard Boulvert*, run by Professor Luigi Labruna from *Università degli Studi di Napoli “Federico II,”* and with *Centro Romanistico Internazionale Copanello*, functioning at the universities in Catania, Catanzaro, and Messina, and run by Professor Alessandro Corbino – significantly contributed to the founding of the International School of Roman Law, and to establishing contact with university circles in the former USSR.

### **Activity of the International School of Roman Law**

The majority of sessions of the International School of Roman Law were held in the seat of OBTA or at other academic centres in Poland. These sessions, in the form of seminars and lectures, aimed at preparing young researchers into Roman law to carry out independent academic work and teaching. Lectures and seminars were given by Polish professors of Roman law and by distinguished experts from Italy, Germany, and other highly developed centres of Roman law studies. The meetings were held each year in

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<sup>2</sup> See MSPR's website: <http://www.mspr.obta.uw.edu.pl/english.htm> (consulted: Oct. 11, 2013).

September and lasted two weeks. The International School of Roman Law also supported the participants in their efforts to be granted scholarships at renowned Roman law research centres in Italy and in other countries, where such centres functioned, and organized classes in Italian, which is most helpful in studying Roman law.



Session of MSPR, June 23, 2008, IBI AL, Nowy Świat St. 69. From the left: Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz, Prof. Maria Zabłocka, Prof. Jerzy Styka

The structure of the International School of Roman Law was included in the framework of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH), organized by OBTA together with the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation. The activity of the International School of Roman Law was synchronized with the initiatives of the aforementioned Italian centres for the study of Roman law and the Faculty of Law at the Lomonosov Moscow State University, run by Professor Leonid Kofanov. The Academic Council of the International School of Roman Law, the chairmanship of which I assumed, was composed of members of the Academic Council of Centro Romanistico Internazionale Copanello.



Between 2001 and 2008, six sessions of the International School of Roman Law were held – the names of the lecturers are listed in the order in which they gave classes:

- in 2001: Prof. Nicola Palazzolo, Prof. Andreas Wacke, Dr. Agnieszka Kacprzak, Prof. Maria Zabłocka, Dr. Jakub Urbanik, Dr. Jerzy Krzynówek, Prof. Tomasz Giaro, Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz, Prof. Antonio Masi, Prof. Jan Zabłocki, Prof. Evgen Charitonov, Prof. Luigi Garofalo, Prof. Juliusz Bardach;
- in 2002: Prof. Francesco Milazzo, Prof. Fausto Gorla, Prof. Maria Zabłocka, Dr. Jakub Urbanik, Prof. Tomasz Giaro, Dr. Agnieszka Kacprzak, Prof. Jan Zabłocki, Prof. Francesco Guizzi, Prof. Luigi Garofalo, Prof. Alessandro Corbino, Dr. Jerzy Krzynówek, Prof. Carla Masi Doria, Prof. Cosimo Cascione;
- in 2003: Prof. Maria Zabłocka, Dr. Jakub Urbanik, Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz, Prof. Jan Zabłocki, Dr. Zuzanna Służewska, Prof. Tommaso Masiello, Dr. Agnieszka Kacprzak, Dr. Jerzy Krzynówek, Prof. Luigi Capogrossi Colognesi, Prof. Carla Masi Doria, Prof. Cosimo Cascione, Prof. Francesco Musumeci, Prof. Alessandro Corbino. His Excellency Ambassador of the Italian Republic Giancarlo Leo took part in the closing ceremonies;
- in 2004: Prof. Andreas Wacke, Prof. Giuseppe Falcone, Prof. Salvatore Pugliatti, Dr. Agnieszka Kacprzak, Dr. Jerzy Krzynówek, Dr. Zuzanna Służewska, Dr. Jakub Urbanik, Prof. Francesco Salerno, Prof. Tomasz Giaro, Prof. Giorgio Barone Adesi, Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz;
- in 2005: Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz, Dr. Agnieszka Kacprzak, Dr. Jerzy Krzynówek, Prof. Jan Zabłocki, Prof. Cosimo Cascione, Prof. Carla Masi Doria, Prof. Tomasz Giaro;
- in 2008: Prof. Witold Wołodkiewicz, Prof. Carla Masi Doria, Prof. Cosimo Cascione, Prof. Francesco Salerno, Prof. Alessandro Corbino, Dr. Jerzy Krzynówek, Prof. Luigi Labruna, Prof. Floriana Cursi, Dr. Zuzanna Służewska, Prof. Maria Zabłocka, Prof. Jan Zabłocki.

The secretaries of the sessions were: Doctor Jakub Urbanik, Doctor Agnieszka Stępkowska, Doctor Anna Plisecka, and Doctor Agata Szymańska.

Among the seventy participants of the sessions, the majority came from various parts of the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Moreover, the sessions were attended by young researchers from Croatia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Lithuania, and China. Although the activity of the International School of Roman Law enjoyed the interest of both participants and lecturers, it was temporarily suspended in 2009 due to financial difficulties.

The Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” of which the transformed Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA) is a permanent unit, continues to study Roman law and its cultural significance. Recently the Faculty supported the efforts of Doctor Agnieszka Kacprzak to obtain a grant (her post-doctoral programme – “habilitacja” – is currently in progress) within the subject of *Definitions for Roman Jurists*. The author carries out research concerning the influence of the cultural surrounding on the creation of legal definitions/rules in Roman law and the impact of Roman definitions on contemporary legal culture.



## HELLENIC STUDIES

IN CONTRAST TO THE SPLENDID, centuries-old traditions of research on the culture of Ancient Greece (and, to a narrower extent, that of Byzantine Greece) and the teaching of Classical Greek at Polish schools and universities, Modern Greek and the literary and cultural output of Modern Greece have never been a separate subject of academic studies in Poland.<sup>1</sup> Surprising though it may be, neither trading relations with the Greeks, dating back to the Middle Ages, nor the considerable population of Greeks in Lviv, Brześć, Ostróg, Warsaw, and other cities of the *I Rzeczpospolita* (Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), with the abundance of Greek-rite churches, schools, and printing houses, prompted the foundation of such studies. Although the great insurrection of the Greeks in 1821 (in which Poles also fought) caused quite a stir in Polish romantic literature (Juliusz Słowacki, Zygmunt Krasiński, Cyprian Kamil Norwid, and other “lesser romanticists”),<sup>2</sup> it did not arouse interest in Modern Greek literature, as was the case in the West.<sup>3</sup> There was but a handful of translations and paraphrases of the songs of the Greek people, popularized in Europe owing to the publications of works by Claude Fauriel,<sup>4</sup> collected texts by Aleksander

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<sup>1</sup> See Oktawiusz Jurewicz, *Neogrecystyka w Polsce*, “Meander” 13 (1958), pp. 81–87.

<sup>2</sup> See Maria Kalinowska, *Grecja romantyków. Studia nad obrazem Grecji w literaturze romantycznej*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń 1994.

<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., Wincenty Gorzycki, *Walka Grecji o niepodległość w wieku XIX*, Spółka Akcyjna Polska Składnica Pomocy Szkolnych, Warszawa 1922; Tadeusz Sinko, *Udział Polaków w bojach i pracach Hellady*, “Przegląd Współczesny” 42 (1932), pp. 280–281.

<sup>4</sup> See Claude Fauriel, *Chants populaires de la Grèce moderne*, vols. I–II, Firmin Didot père et fils, Paris 1824–1825.

Chodźko<sup>5</sup> or Józef Dunin Borkowski,<sup>6</sup> *Lambro* – the Byronic poem by Juliusz Słowacki, the translation of the first stanza of the *Hymn to Liberty* by Dionysios Solomos (Διονύσιος Σολωμός), included by Słowacki in his *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej z Neapolu* [*Travel to the Holy Land from Naples*], and the early novel by Zygmunt Krasieński – *Syn Botzarysa* [*The Son of Botzaris*] – and that was virtually all. Dunin Borkowski's translation of what was probably the first history of Modern Greek literature, written by the popular Phanariote politician, dramatist, and writer, Iakovakis Rizos Neroulos (Ιακωβάκης Ρίζος Νερουλός),<sup>7</sup> and published in French as early as during the insurrection, remained in manuscript form.<sup>8</sup> Polish classical philologists rarely raised the issues of Modern Greece. Sporadic studies were published by Seweryn Hammer,<sup>9</sup> who translated the poem on the adventures of Digenis Akritas (Διγενής Ακρίτας), while Kazimierz Bulas elaborated Poland's first outline of Modern Greek literature.<sup>10</sup>

A slight change in the situation was caused by the inflow to Poland, between 1948 and 1956, of political refugees from Greece.<sup>11</sup> Although Greek schools were founded for the immigrants' children, and Polish printing houses published special textbooks in Modern Greek for those youngsters, and amateur music bands were established, philological studies were

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<sup>5</sup> See Aleksander Chodźko, *Poezye*, Nowa Drukarnia Pompejusza i Spółki, Poznań 1833 (first edition: Sankt Petersburg 1829).

<sup>6</sup> See Józef Dunin Borkowski, *Wybór poezji*, ed. Adam Ważyk, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, Kraków 1950.

<sup>7</sup> See Jacovaky Rizo Néroulos, *Cours de littérature grecque moderne*, Abraham Cherbuliez, Genève 1827.

<sup>8</sup> See Józef Dunin Borkowski, *Dzieje nowo-greckiej literatury*, Biblioteka Ossolińskich, ref. 9534/11, microfilm 1068.

<sup>9</sup> See Seweryn Hammer, *De rerum naturae sensu apud poetas medii aevii Graeco-barbaros*, "Eos" 22 (1917), pp. 24–26, see also idem, *Neograeca*, "Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Poznańskiego. Sekcja Humanistyczna" 3, Gebethner i Wolff, Poznań 1920.

<sup>10</sup> See Kazimierz Bulas, entry *Literatura nowogrecka*, in *Wielka literatura powszechna*, ed. Stanisław Lam, Wyd. Trzaska, Evert i Michalski, Warszawa 1933, vol. IV, pp. 761–791.

<sup>11</sup> See, e.g., Mieczysław Wojecki, *Uchodźcy polityczni z Grecji w Polsce 1948–1975*, Krakowskie Towarzystwo Naukowe, Jelenia Góra 1989.

opened at not a single Polish university. Some of them (the University of Wrocław or the Jagiellonian University) organized Modern Greek language classes for merely a short period of time.

At the University of Warsaw there were elective classes in Modern Greek addressed to Classical Philology students. They were taught by Janis Kurtis, who also gave some of his own books to the library of the then Department of Classical Philology.

### **Our Road to Modern Greece**

In the academic year 1974/1975, as a Classical Philology graduate, I started work in the then Department of Classical Philology of the University of Warsaw and, from the very beginning, my main field of research – as I thought at that time – was the literature of Ancient Greece. Two stays at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (1980/1981 and 1984/1985) not only allowed me to learn Modern Greek but, first of all, showed me the literary and cultural output of Modern Greeks. Just like many classical philologists before me who developed a fascination with the great literature of the small nation, I also decided to devote myself to learn and investigate this literature. Above all, however, I yearned to share my knowledge not only with students, but also with Polish readers who knew nothing of the literature of their Greek contemporaries and who would go to Greece to admire the sun and water and jump at the occasion to see the monuments of classical culture, of which they read in textbooks.

Starting in 1985, when I returned from a one-year scholarship obtained from the Greek government in Thessaloniki, I started to hold elective classes on Modern Greek for Classical Philology students, continuing the tradition initiated by Kurtis. At the same time, I worked on the first comprehensive Modern Greek handbook: *Intensywny kurs języka nowogreckiego* [*Intensive Course of Modern Greek*], published by the renowned academic publishing house, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, in 1991.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See Małgorzata Borowska, *Intensywny kurs języka nowogreckiego*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1991.

At the initiative of Jerzy Axer, Classical Philology professor and classical theatre specialist, in 1991, an independent Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA) was founded at the University of Warsaw, the mission of which encompassed not only broad interdisciplinary research on the history of the reception of Classical Antiquity, but also the implementation of experimental teaching programmes. The Centre created a unique chance for the development of Modern Greek Philology in Poland as a separate discipline and for building the studies in this scope from scratch. In 1993, the first laboratory was founded in OBTA, namely, the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies (in Polish: Pracownia Studiów Helleńskich, PSH).



Logo of the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies

### **Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies**

“The aim of the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies (PSH) is to create Philhellenic milieux, to educate research staff and good translators, and to slowly circulate the masterpieces of Modern Greek literature among readers,” I wrote in the application for the establishment of the Laboratory and, independently of the continuation of the Modern Greek classes for students of the University of Warsaw, I began my fight for the launching in the

Centre of what were pioneer studies on the knowledge of Modern Greece and its language, asking for the help and support of Greek institutions including, in particular, the Greek Ministry of Education and Culture.



Classes with Prof. Małgorzata Borowska, Laboratory of Hellenic Studies, OBTA, Nowy Świat St. 69, 1999. Next to Prof. Borowska: Dr. Iliana Genev-Pouhaleva. Among students (in the second row, second from the left) Przemysław Kordos, today an assistant professor at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales”

Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies, *Language and Culture of Modern Greece* (12 places) were launched in academic year 1997/1998 and were targeted at all university graduates interested in Modern Greek. Indeed, the studies were built from scratch, as there were no developed models or the slightest base in the form of books or teaching aids (no dictionaries, no grammar books, and just a random few books in Modern Greek). The exceptional character of the language – the oldest living language of Europe, one which gave birth to two virtually independent



forms: the language taught (“katharevousa”) and the language spoken (“demotic”) – added to the difficulty in defining the frames of the curriculum. To realize the difficulties caused by the situation in the practical teaching of Modern Greek at the academic level (and not just in everyday chats), it is enough to mention that in Greece, almost the entire output of the Ancient Greeks was translated first into katharevousa and then, either from Classical Greek or from katharevousa, into demotic – as otherwise it would remain inaccessible to the average reader, not to mention secondary school students. Hence the name of the studies – ‘Hellenic,’ rather than simply ‘Modern Greek.’

Next to the intense teaching of Modern Greek (koine neoellenike [κοινή νεοελληνική]) with the necessary elements of katharevousa, the curriculum from the very beginning encompassed the rudiments of Classical Greek and general information on the history, literature, and culture of both Ancient Greece and Christian Byzantium, without which neither Modern Greek literature nor contemporary Greeks can be understood.

The classes were held in the evenings, twice a week, four hours a day, and included practical Modern Greek classes, introduction to Classical Greek, and lectures and seminars on Greek history and literature from Homer to the present. They were held by experienced lecturers from OBTA and the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of Warsaw, and by qualified Modern Greek lecturers whom we invited for cooperation from wherever possible, trying to build our own staff from nothing. Particularly successful in teaching our students was Iliana Pouhaleva, a graduate in Slavic Studies and Modern Greek Studies at the Sofia University and holder of the scholarship granted by the Józef Mianowski Fund – A Foundation for the Promotion of Science, who finally settled in Cracow and is now on the staff of the University of Silesia. Among our guests who taught us the language and literature of the Modern Greeks were: Paweł Krupka, philologist and diplomat, long-time officer at the Polish Embassy in Athens, where he later defended his doctoral thesis at the Faculty of Philosophy of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens; Georgos Theiopoulos (Γιώργος Θεϊόπουλος), graduate in Economics, pedagogue and entrepreneur; as well as Hana Babincová, graduate in Modern Greek

Philology at the Masaryk University in Brno. The pillar of the Laboratory and the studies was the classical philologist, Karol Pacan, who participated in the courses of Modern Greek, and who, as a scholarship holder, went on to broaden his knowledge of Modern Greek in Greece.



Αίθουσα Παπαφιλιππου – Loukis Papaphilippou Conference Room at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” March 25, 2002, OBTA, Nowy Świat St. 69. From the left: Prof. Jerzy Axer, Prof. Małgorzata Borowska, Loukis Papaphilippou, Alekos Michailidis

The small tuition allowed only for partial duplication of teaching materials. Distinguished students had the opportunity to leave for Greece for monthly language courses in Thessaloniki and Athens offered by the State Scholarships Foundation – Iδρυμα Κρατικών Υποτροφιών (IKY).

In 2000, diplomas were awarded to the first five graduates, each of whom passed exams in Modern Greek (intermediate level), Classical Greek (elementary level), introduction to the literature of Classical and Byzantine Greece, introduction to the literature and history of Modern Greece (since 1453), and defended their diploma theses (in Polish, with an extensive summary in Modern Greek).

In its short history (1998/1999–2007/2008), our Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies had several dozen students from different universities – graduates interested in Modern Greece who hailed from such fields as Classical Philology, Modern Philologies, Archaeology, History, Sociology, Philosophy, Theology, and Engineering. The majority were glad to receive a certificate of participation, but there were also some who wrote theses and prepared translations later included in the first volume of the OBTA publishing series “Arcydziała Literatury Nowogreckiej” [“Masterpieces of Modern Greek Literature”].<sup>13</sup> Almost all the diploma theses represented the first studies of this kind written in Polish and the only ones to use the literature on the subject written in Modern Greek. Among the first graduates of the Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies was Przemysław Kordos, student of the Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities of the University of Warsaw (MISH, spec. in Sociology and Ethnography), whose thesis *Mani. Geografia, historia, elementy etnografii* [*The Mani. Geography, History, Elements of Ethnography*] (2000) pointed the direction of his future research interests. As the first alumnus of Modern Greek Philology in Warsaw, he joined the staff of the Hellenic Studies and the circle of Philhellenists.

In this way, the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies (PSH), integrated within the structures of OBTA, added to its role as the coordinator of academic courses of Modern Greek, the function of gathering researchers interested in the issues of Modern Greece and being a centre for the promotion of Greek culture to a wider audience, both at the University and outside its confines. Concurrently, the library of Modern Greek books was steadily

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<sup>13</sup> The list of the volumes published may be found on the Laboratory’s website: <http://www.psh.obta.uw.edu.pl/node/5> (consulted: Oct. 16, 2013).

extended, first owing to private gifts of the still growing circles of our Greek friends and, soon, thanks to the support of such Greek institutions like the Greek Ministry of Education and Culture, the Foundation for Hellenic Culture, and the National Book Centre of Greece (Ελληνικό Κέντρο Βιβλίου, ΕΚΕΒΙ). The names of Greek institutions and of Greek (and Polish) private donors are engraved on a marble plaque in the hall of the present-day Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” documenting the support granted – and our efforts to obtain it.

### **The Modern Greek Specialization for Students**

The opening of the Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies, targeted at graduates, did not interfere with the Modern Greek language classes organized on three levels at OBTA for students of the University of Warsaw. Apart from teaching Modern Greek, we were doing our best to instil in our students an interest in the culture of Modern Greece. Soon, a small dance group was established, named “Phoundakia,” which means “The Pompons” (φούντα – pompon). The group was composed of Modern Greek folk dance enthusiasts, who initially – outrageously – learnt their skills from textbooks alone, which included descriptions of moves and the numbering of steps. Luckily, the first members of “Phoundakia” had the opportunity to develop their skills during summer language courses in Greece and pass them on to others after they returned. There was also a presentation of the first folk shadow theatre in Poland (Karagiozis), which became a historic event. A professional shadow theatre actor does everything on his own – from the figures and the scenography to the manipulation of the actors, dubbing, singing, and special effects – or has one assistant at most. In our amateur group were students of the Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities (MISH), Classical Philology, and Archaeology, and we acted as a team, staging the Polish translation of a short comedy by Antonis Mollas (Αντώνης Μόλλας) *The Lie – Psema* (Ψέμα). The main actor was the then secretary of PSH and a lecturer at our studies – the aforementioned Karol Pacan. The play was ended with a dance by “Phoundakia.” No wonder that the then Ambassador of Greece and a great friend of Poland, His

Excellency Georges Alexandropoulos (Γεώργιος Αλεξανδρόπουλος) who was sitting in the audience, told us, sincerely moved: “I have never seen such a Karagiozis performance nor such Greek dances.”

The interest enjoyed by the classes on Greek language and culture motivated us to create “something more,” namely, to found the Modern Greek specialization. This was possible owing to the PSH’s cooperation with the Faculty of Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw. In the academic year 2001/2002, a three-year Modern Greek specialization was launched in PSH, addressed to the students of the Faculty of Polish Studies. It was later aimed toward becoming undergraduate diploma in Modern Greek Philology. The framework curriculum of the specialization included 180 hours of practical classes in Modern Greek and descriptive grammar with elements of historical grammar for each of the two first years, an obligatory course on Classical Greek, and specialized conversational classes and lectures on the history, literature, and culture of Greece. The students were obliged to pass their oral exam in the canon of literary works by classical authors, translated into Polish, and by Modern Greek authors, in the original. Year three included such obligatory classes as: the Modern Greek proseminar, translation classes, and monograph lectures, within which 30 hours were lectured in Greek. After year three, students had to pass an exam in Modern Greek at least at the intermediate level (B’), although – as it turned out – the best students (after monthly courses in Greece) reached the then highest possible level (Γ’).

The first year of teaching the Modern Greek specialization within the framework of Polish Studies revealed its primary shortcoming: it was accessible only to students of the Faculty of Polish Studies, among whom were students of Classical Philology – for they were the most interested in Modern Greek – but it remained out of reach for archaeologists, historians, and others. We had no choice but to transform the specialization into a separate, independent field of studies: undergraduate studies on Modern Greek Philology, which was all the more important in that all those who were already pursuing the specialization were willing to obtain a diploma in Modern Greek Philology, next to their title in Polish Studies. Thus, in the academic year 2002/2003, acting in cooperation with the Faculty of

Polish Studies and having received the consent of the Senate of the University of Warsaw, we liquidated the specialization, automatically moving the students to a relevant year of undergraduate studies. This is how the new field of studies, Modern Greek Philology, was born at OBTA.

The curriculum was changed substantially. First of all, it was adjusted to the requirements of the minimum curriculum for the philological field as required by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. OBTA, which was rapidly expanding, ensured relevant staff. Students were introduced to the history of the Byzantine Empire by Professor Oktawiusz Jurewicz, classical philologist and expert in Byzantine Studies, a long-time chairman of the Byzantinological Commission at the Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences (KNoKA PAN), translator of Anna Komnene and Photius. Students were also taught the history of Greek language by Professor Jurewicz's former student, now Professor Robert A. Sucharski, one of the few specialists on the rare discipline of Mycenaeanology in Poland.

But, most importantly, we finally had our own staff. From the very beginning, Przemysław Kordos cooperated with the PSH. He had defended his doctoral thesis in 2007 and was employed as an assistant professor (contract for an indefinite time). It is difficult to imagine the operation of the PSH, not to mention the existence or development of the Modern Greek Philology, without his energy and enthusiasm. By introducing ethnographic and cultural issues to the curriculum, he gave the studies a unique character and a wider context. This was an invaluable asset to our students, who now had a better starting point to work for their MA titles at Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization on the “Greek path.”<sup>14</sup>

In 2004, two other PSH students defended their BA theses. They were: Jacek Raszewski (also MA in Philosophy) and Karolina Berezowska (also MA in Applied Linguistics), who undertook to hold language and elective classes. For several years, Karolina Berezowska was a lecturer in contrastive grammar and offered translation seminars. Jacek Raszewski, on

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<sup>14</sup> On this field of studies see the paper by Jerzy Styka, *Mediterranean Studies*, p. 125, in the present volume.

the other hand, besides language classes also held seminars devoted to the writings of the period of the insurrection of 1821. In 2005, Konrad Kuczara (also MA in Ukrainian Philology) and Kaja Dybowska (also MA in Classical Philology) joined the ranks of the Modern Greek staff.

We were doing our best to give our students of the upper years the opportunity for contact with interesting guests from Greece: scholars, writers, and journalists. In 2008, we were visited by the eminent poet Georgos Anagnostopoulos (Γεώργος Αναγνωστόπουλος) – the selection of his poems, translated by one of our students, was published by the publishing house Heliodor<sup>15</sup> – and the well-known writer Vassilis Vassilikos (Βασίλης Βασιλικός) – the author of the famous novel entitled *Z*, translated into many languages and filmed by Costa-Gavras (1969).<sup>16</sup>

Thanks to the patronage of the Greek Embassy in Warsaw and the unflagging support of the Greek Ministry of Education and Culture, we were guaranteed to have at least one lecturer (native speaker) delegated, fully paid by the Greek side. Obviously, this did not solve all our problems. It should be remembered that, as there had never been such studies in Poland before, there were no Polish academic lecturers with formal education in Modern Greek Philology, either. Our small staff was the reason why the intake to the new studies was limited (15–20 places) and why new students were accepted only every two years.

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<sup>15</sup> See Γεώργος Αναγνωστόπουλος, *Επιλογές από κήπον ποιητικό. Zbiory z ogrodu poetyckiego*, trans. Paulina Zatorska, Paweł Krupka, in the series “Zbliżenia,” Heliodor, Warszawa 2008. In the very same series supervised by Paweł Krupka other poetic volumes have been published, the ones by Maria Mistrioti (Μαρία Μιστριώτη), Dinos Koumbatis (Ντίνος Κουμπάτης), Nikos Anogis (Νίκος Ανώγης), and Panagiotis Tsoutakos (Παναγιώτης Τσουτάκος), in our students’ translations.

<sup>16</sup> Greek edition: Βασίλης Βασιλικός, *Z*, Θεμέλιο, Αθήνα 1966. For the Polish edition see Vassilis Vassilikos, *Z*, trans. from French Agnieszka Daniłowicz, from Greek into Polish Adam Chomicz, Czytelnik, Warszawa, 1976. For the English edition see: Vassilis Vassilikos, *Z*, trans. Marilyn Calmann, Thunder’s Mouth Pr, 1991.

### **Modern Greek Philology**

In 2003, the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The celebrations coincided with the invitation of the representatives of Poland to be guests of honour and to participate in the annual celebration of national holidays in Missolonghi, the Holy City of the Greeks. I had the honour to be among them, along with Jacek Raszewski. We commemorated the tragic and heroic moments of the history of the city with the hosts.

When the great insurrection against the Turks broke out in 1821, Missolonghi, the small fishing town on the banks of a picturesque but malarial bay, was among the first cities to be liberated and became the headquarters of at least one region where the insurrection was raging. In 1822, the defendants of Missolonghi repulsed the onslaught of much more numerous Turkish forces. In this way, as one of the greatest Polish poets of Romanticism wrote, “the nest, where for once, the defenders of liberty resisted forces which were one hundred times as numerous as they were,”<sup>17</sup> gave an example of heroism not only to the then fighting Greeks, but to the whole of Europe. In 1824, Lord Byron died there. In 1826, the Turks once more besieged Missolonghi, which gave shelter to thousands of women and children from the vicinity. After the months-long stubborn resistance, the defenders – who faced the threat of death from starvation – decided to attempt to break the siege on Holy Saturday. As a result of treachery, the attempt ended with the terrible slaughter of the peoples of Missolonghi and the burning of the city. The heroic fight of the defenders became part of the Greek legends on the fights for freedom and Missolonghi has remained a holy place in the memory of the Greeks until this day.<sup>18</sup> In the great Garden of Heroes (heroon), established within the fortifications of the city, monuments were built next to the graves of its defenders commemorating the Philhellenists from various European countries who laid down their lives

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<sup>17</sup> Juliusz Słowacki, *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej z Neapolu*, IV 18, in Juliusz Słowacki, *Dzieła*, vol. III, ed. Jerzy Pelc, Zakład im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1949, p. 30.

<sup>18</sup> Officially, Missolonghi was awarded the title of “Holy City” by the Greek government in 1937.



for Greece. Among them are Poles whose symbolic grave is ornamented with the sculpture of an eagle with outstretched wings and the inscription: “For Greece and Poland.” It is a tradition that each year representatives of one of the countries whose citizens are buried in the Garden of Heroes are invited to celebrate the Memorial Day of the defendants of Missolonghi.



Tomb commemorating Polish soldiers in the Garden of Heroes in Missolonghi

In this historical place and exceptional atmosphere, we had the opportunity to present the achievements of our studies and to show how our Laboratory was pursuing the goals we had set at its establishment. After the official part, the mayor of Missolonghi invited us for the evening to a meeting with the participants of the celebrations and residents of the city. The latter watched our presentation with great emotion, surprised that so much is known and so much is being done for Greece in exotic Poland.

The jubilee academic year 2002/2003 was an important chapter of the history of our Laboratory for many a reason. Firstly, it was exceptional for the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies because, appreciating our rapid development and the achievements of the Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies, the Greek Ministry of Education and Culture assigned to us another Modern Greek lecturer. For personal reasons, Sonia Stampoulidou (Σόνια Σταμπουλίδου) cooperated with us for a short time only, and a year later was replaced by Giorgos Molozis (Γιώργος Μολώζης). Nevertheless, it was at Sonia's initiative that we established contact with the Greek Language Centre (Κέντρο Ελληνικής Γλώσσας, ΚΕΓ) in Thessaloniki, the institution of the Greek Ministry of Education and Culture, and were soon certified as the first (and the only) Examination Centre (Εξεταστικό Κέντρο) in Poland. In May 2004, we organized the first Ellenomatheia exams (Πιστοποιητικό Ελληνομάθειας) – Certificate of Attainment in Modern Greek, and on all three levels. That we were able to get to know the structure of the exam and the requirements, described in detail for each level, was of invaluable aid to us when we worked on our own language syllabi, and contributed to the improvement of Modern Greek teaching at our University.

Moreover, we also hosted outstanding guests. First, we were visited by the chairman of the Société Internationale des Amis de Nikos Kazantzakis (Νίκος Καζαντζάκης), Georgos Stasinakis (Γεώργος Στασινάκης), who travels tirelessly around the world promoting knowledge on the output and thought of the great Cretan writer. Later, our guests included students from the secondary school in Krioneri, near Athens. Finally, owing to our cooperation with the “Dora Stratou” Dance Theatre from Athens (Θέατρο Χορού “Δόρα Στράτου”), we hosted one of its dancers, Giannis Karagiannis (Γιάννης Καραγιάννης), who held dancing workshops, attended by many participants.

In September 2005, the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies organized an academic tour around Greece. The route, prepared by the head of the trip, Przemysław Kordos, led through the Ionian Islands, the Epirus Region, and the Peloponnese to Athens and was documented with more than 17,000 photographs, a travel diary by Kasia Jaworska, along with a video of sev-

eral hours which she recorded. Among the participants of the trip were students of Modern Greek Philology, Classical Philology, Archaeology, and MISH.



Participants in the research tour on a bridge in Zagoria, Epirus, 2005

Photographs taken by the travellers are used as illustrations in subsequent volumes of the “Masterpieces of Modern Greek Literature” series and other publications.

### **Our Route to Cyprus**

Throughout all these years, we were supported by our sponsor and friend, Loukis Papaphilippou (Λουκῆς Παπαφιλίππου) who visited the Laboratory as often as he could, witnessing our achievements and observing the development of the Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies. In 2000, I had the

honour to hand him the just-published academic Modern Greek textbook.<sup>19</sup> Together with the earlier Classical Greek manual,<sup>20</sup> the book enabled our students to view the Greek language in a diachronic perspective. During his visit in 2002, our guest conducted classes himself, giving us the chance to hear with our own ears the Cypriot dialect.



Prof. Małgorzata Borowska and Loukis Papaphilippou

During the next visit of Papaphilippou, in November 2006, we organized an event which was unique in the entire history of the University of Warsaw, namely, the inauguration of the Loukis Papaphilippou Seat of Advancement in Modern Greek at the University of Warsaw, attended by its founder, the Rector, and the Vice-Rectors. The founder delivered a speech in English, using almost exclusively words with Greek origin,

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<sup>19</sup> See Małgorzata Borowska, *Barbajorgos. Książka do nauki języka nowogreckiego*, Wydawnictwo Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 2000.

<sup>20</sup> See Małgorzata Borowska, *Mormolyke. Książka do nauki języka starogreckiego*, OBTA–Wydawnictwo Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1996.

followed by a performance of “Phoundakia.” The Seat entailed the position of a lecturer (assistant professor – since 2007) in the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies which, for the first few years, was fully paid by the founder. The position was offered to Przemysław Kordos, the PSH secretary and the co-author of all its successes.

It dawned on us that the issues of Cyprus should find a permanent place in the curriculum of the Modern Greek Philology. At the beginning of the academic year 2007/2008, for the first time we organized a one-semester lecture at the University, open to all, entitled *Introduction to the History, Literature, and Culture of Cyprus*. From the very beginning, the main lecturer has been Przemysław Kordos, the first holder of the Loukis Papaphilippou Seat. The huge interest enjoyed by the lecture made us extend it into a yearly cycle. Soon, Cyprus-related issues became the subject of the diploma theses of our students.

### **The Close of the Pioneer Years**

The end of the academic year 2005/2006 was marked by the farewell to our first Greek lecturer, Ourania Lalioti (Ουρανία Λαλιώτη), whose delegation in Poland was not extended, despite our immense support. She was sent to the East Coast of the United States. Ourania had been building the Hellenic Studies with us for six years. Not only did she teach Modern Greek, but she sang with our students, cooked with them, went on trips, participated in their family lives, and even taught them how to write icons, being herself a graduate in Theology and Icon Writing. She has stayed in touch with her students ever since, knowing more about their professional careers and private lives than we do. In the meantime, she found time to get her MA title at the Christian Theological Academy in Warsaw, to have her collection of poems published in Athens, and to prepare a showing of her own paintings. The enthusiasm and optimism that Ourania spread around herself was irreplaceable. With her departure we had the feeling that our pioneer years had come to an end.

One year before Ourania left, the Greek Ministry of Education and Culture unexpectedly delegated two lecturers to work with us: Maria Lazari-

dou (Μαρία Λαζαρίδου) and Thanasis Dimitriou (Θανάσης Δημητρίου) – a married couple and, a year later (for the first time), a lecturer specialized in academic teaching, Doctor Maria Karabatsa (Μαρία Καραμπάτσα).



Ourania Lalioti

The three lecturers fully satisfied our didactic needs, with their services being available both to the students of Mediterranean Studies and to the students of Classical Philology, interested in Modern Greek. With such a strong staff we believed that, for the first time, we were able to plan further development of the studies, that is, to complement them with two-year MA studies.

Unfortunately, Maria and Thanasis, who had already settled in with us and learnt to identify the problems encountered by Polish-speaking students while learning Modern Greek, were recalled after two years and replaced, for a while, by Giorgos Kapelouzos (Γιώργος Καπελούζος), who did not meet our expectations. It was obvious that Maria Karabatsa was unable to carry on her own huge teaching burdens. Aided by the

then lecturers' curator in charge of our region of Europe (with his seat in Berlin), we were doing our best to bring about the sending of two successors of the recalled couple instead of one. Our detailed reports on the operation of the Laboratory and the achievements of the studies sent year by year to the curator and the Ministry were, as we believed, not without meaning here. In 2008/2009, we received two experienced lecturers, Eleni Ellenopoulou (Ελένη Ελληνόπουλου) and Vlasios Montemarkos (Βλάσιος Μοντεμάρκος), and, again, we could focus on the next stage of development of our studies.

In May 2008, the last students left the Two-Year Postgraduate Hellenic Studies. The closing of this level of education coincided with changes in the enrollment for the first-cycle studies which, starting the academic year 2009/2010, has been organized every year.

### **Teaching and Research Work**

From the very beginning of the existence of the Hellenic Studies, functioning in accordance with the foundation act of OBTA, and later IBI AL, we combined teaching and research work. We invited students – from the second year of undergraduate studies onwards – to participate in all programmes and initiatives organized in the Centre. The main task for our discipline was to elaborate a source base accessible in Polish, with a relevantly extensive commentary and introduction. Contrary to the majority of other modern philologies, Modern Greek Philology, which was a novelty only, had no output. Translations from Modern Greek were not a commonplace – despite the efforts of the few distinguished translators (Nikos Chadzinikolau, Janusz Strasburger, Zygmunt Kubiak) – they were still published rarely and incidentally. Therefore, the above-mentioned series of the “Masterpieces of Modern Greek Literature” was created at OBTA, the aim of which was to present thoroughly selected works of the modern era, ones altogether unknown, and which, in our opinion, deserved popularization just as much as the works by ancient Greek authors. Concurrently, the series became a training ground for students: they had the opportunity to see what they could do as translators of literary texts, acquiring translation

skills via practice, both during seminars or conversation classes and in individual work. A group of students and graduates under my supervision worked on almost all of the ten volumes published so far – more than forty people in total! Owing to the initiative of Doctor Paweł Krupka, some of them established cooperation with the Heliodor publishing house, which published their translations of several volumes of verse by contemporary Greek poets.<sup>21</sup>

OBTA, IBI AL, and now, the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” have implemented numerous team academic projects. Our students and graduates participate in some of them and are successful. Among those who most significantly contributed to the research on Philhellenism in Poland (articles, editorial work) are the students of Modern Greek Philology, the BA degree holders who continue education at the Mediterranean Studies, and the graduates. Translations by our students can also be read in the “Omphalos” journal, published by the Mediterranean Students Club at our Faculty.

Students and graduates participate in the numerous conferences we organize which are devoted to Greece or, in a wider context, to the Balkans. They have delivered presentations and papers, for instance, at meetings of Philhellenism researchers in Poland or, more recently, during the international conference entitled *Cyprus – the History, Literature, and Culture*, held over December 7–8, 2012, under the wings of the Cyprus Embassy, within the scope of Cyprus’ presidency of the Council of the European Union. The holders of scholarships granted by the University of Cyprus in Nicosia used their experiences and shared with us the research which they had carried out there independently.

An important part of the operation of our Hellenic Studies, especially for the shaping and development of social competencies and the activities of our students, was the creation of the philhellenic milieu through the promotion of Modern Greek culture and popularization of knowledge on Modern Greece. Each year, our students participate actively in the Day of European Languages. Moreover, we co-organize lectures and events in

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<sup>21</sup> See n. 15.



cooperation with the Friends of Greece Association. The dancing group “Phoundakia” was reactivated and, in 2011, it was composed of sixteen people (our students, several students of other fields, and even two secondary school students), and was supervised by Doctor Argyro Tsermegas, assistant professor at the Faculty of Geography of the University of Warsaw and expert in Modern Greek folk dances. “Phoundakia” has several dozen performances on its scorecard, including a show at the Archaeological Festival in Biskupin. Furthermore, our permanent cooperation with the “Dora Stratou” Dance Theatre from Athens has borne fruit in the form of the Polish translation, by Joanna Wegner (BA, 2011), of the book written by the head of the Theatre and researcher on Greek dance, Professor Alkis Raptis (Άλκης Ράφτης) – *The World of Greek Dance*.<sup>22</sup>

### **Prospects**

In 2012, the first-cycle studies in Modern Greek Philology for the first time ever obtained certification by the Polish Accreditation Committee. At the same time, as a result of the new Act on Higher Education coming into force, we needed to revise all syllabi and adjust them to the new requirements. Luckily, all this, plus the day-to-day functioning of the studies, was (and still is) overseen by our Didactic Secretariat. The work on the elaboration of reports and statements made us redefine our priorities, both in teaching (and its effects) and research. Simultaneously, as a result of the deepening economic crisis in Greece, the Greek Ministry of Education and Culture unexpectedly recalled two out of our three Greek lecturers. We were prepared for such an eventuality and included it in our modified curriculum. Nevertheless, the necessity to ensure the continuity of first-cycle studies made us put off our plans to launch complementary MA studies and reduced the offer of language classes for students of other fields.

Within the nine years Modern Greek Philology has operated, fifty-nine students have obtained the title of Bachelor of Arts. Some of them have

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<sup>22</sup> See Alkis Raftis, *Świat tańca greckiego*, trans. Joanna Wegner, ed. Przemysław Kordos, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Grecji–IBI AL UW, Warszawa 2012.

continued their education following the Greek path at the second-cycle Cultural Studies on Mediterranean Civilization and defended MA theses, the subjects of which were the issues of Modern Greece. Most of the students had the chance to attend monthly language courses or one-semester or one-year internships under the Erasmus Programme at Greek or Cypriot universities. During just one academic year, fifteen of our students were staying in Greece simultaneously.

The number of students taking the Certificate of Attainment in Modern Greek exams, known as the *Ellenomatheia* (Πιστοποιητικό Ελληνομάθειας), is growing year by year. Some of them (especially the ones who have completed stays in Greece or Cyprus) successfully take on the highest level six (C2).

Nor have we abandoned our translation or research activity. Just recently, two subsequent volumes of the “Masterpieces of Modern Greek Literature” series were published. The jubilee 10<sup>th</sup> volume – *Opowieści z wyspy Skiatos* [*Tales from the Isle of Skiathos*] – includes translations of short stories by Alexandros Papadiamantis (Αλέξανδρος Παπαδιαμάντης), elaborated, under my supervision, by seventeen students and five graduates in Modern Greek Philology and Mediterranean Civilization. The other two books published within the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies include articles written on the basis of some already finished and some under-construction diploma theses of our students. The upcoming issue of the new “Colloquia Humanistica” journal will include a poem by the Cretan poet Stephanos Sachlikis (Στέφανος Σαχλίκης, 14<sup>th</sup> century), translated by five Modern Greek Philology graduates (who were then 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 3<sup>rd</sup>-year students).

We do our best to stay in touch with our graduates – Modern Greek Philology BA holders, holders of the MA degree in the second-cycle “Greek path” within the framework of Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization, and other alumni. A vast majority of them graduated in more than one field and use their Modern Greek qualifications as a highly important, yet not the only one asset on the labour market. As mentioned, some of them have either defended their doctoral theses on Modern Greek issues or are preparing such. Some study at foreign universities. Among our graduates are officials of the Embassy of Greece and Cyprus, bank of-

ficials, employees of travel agencies, and various Polish-Greek enterprises or people who established their own translation agencies and language schools. Staying in touch with our graduates and tracing their professional careers is an invaluable source of clues to us, showing how to modify the Modern Greek curriculum without lowering the level of academic liberal arts studies. It also indicates how to prepare our graduates, in the best way possible, to face the challenges of their professional lives.

The Laboratory of Hellenic Studies was also expanded. Professor Maria Kalinowska is the head of the Philhellenic team (its second book presenting the results of further research has just been published<sup>23</sup>), and is working on the project: *Sparta in Polish Literature and Culture*. Professor Jolanta Sujecka introduces students to the world of difficult Balkan subjects, opening for us the pages of her aforementioned “Colloquia Humanistica.” Students have the chance to listen to lectures on the history and literature of Ancient Greece held by Professor Jerzy Styka (Head of the Institute of Classical Philology at the Jagiellonian University) and are initiated into the history of Greek language by Professor Robert A. Sucharski. Those who continue education in the field of Mediterranean Civilization indeed have a lot of options to choose from. Additionally, Modern Greek Philology has obtained new, young staff – namely, two of its graduates, people full of enthusiasm and fresh ideas: Doctor Jacek Raszewski (2010) and Doctor Konrad Kuczara (2011).

The library of the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies boasts the biggest collection of Modern Greek (and Cypriot) books in Poland, as well as special collections like, for example, a valuable collection of postcards donated by Halina and Janusz Strasburger.

On the back cover of the “Masterpieces of Modern Greek Literature” series, I explain why the patron of the series is... the Gorgon. Greek people believe that the Gorgon sometimes appears to the crews of ships sailing

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<sup>23</sup> See *Filhellenizm w Polsce. Wybrane tematy*, eds. Małgorzata Borowska, Maria Kalinowska, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2012. The first one is: *Filhellenizm w Polsce. Rekonesans*, eds. Małgorzata Borowska, Maria Kalinowska, Jarosław Ławski, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, OBTA–Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2007.

across the Mediterranean Sea, asking one question only: “Does he still live and reign?”. One must give a positive answer since, otherwise, the Gorgon will unleash a storm. In Modern Greek legends, the Gorgon, regarded as a siren, was the sister of Alexander the Great, who drank his water of life and threw herself into the sea out of despair, where she has been roaming ever since, immortal, asking about her brother’s fate. In fact, what she is asking about is the fate of the Greek tradition. The answer she will get at Modern Greek Philology of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” is: “Yes! It lives and reigns!”.



*Jerzy Styka*

## MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES

**A**LTHOUGH THE HISTORY OF MEDITERRANEAN STUDIES at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” does not even encompass ten years, their position among the numerous courses of our Warsaw Alma Mater is altogether solid. Mediterranean Studies arose upon the decision of the Senate of the University of Warsaw dated December 17, 2003, in the then Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA).



Logo of the Mediterranean Studies

The Centre, established in 1991 by Professor Jerzy Axer, marked the beginning of what is today the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.” Ever since 1996, the Centre has functioned as a base unit of the University of Warsaw. In 2008, as a result of intense development, it was transformed into the

Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (IBI AL), to finally become the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” in 2012. The first enrollment for Mediterranean Studies at OBTA was held in July 2004. In accordance with the limit approved, twenty undergraduate (BA) students and fifteen master level (MA) students were matriculated, although the list of candidates was ten times as numerous, especially when it came to BA studies. The full name of the field of study is Cultural Studies, specialization: Mediterranean Civilization.<sup>1</sup> From the very beginning, Mediterranean Studies have had a two-tier structure and have been carried out as intramural courses: three-year undergraduate (BA) first cycle studies and two-year master level (MA) second cycle studies. Bearing in mind how Cultural Studies into Mediterranean Civilization operate today at several Polish universities, it should be mentioned that the formula elaborated at OBTA was unique and served as a model for academic initiatives at other centres.

OBTA was an ideal place for designing and implementing academic Mediterranean Studies. The interdisciplinary research into Graeco-Roman culture, which constituted the essence of Mediterranean Civilization, was in a natural manner embedded in the scientific profile of the Centre, as its primary idea. The strong orientation toward reception opened the opportunity to carry out research on the impact of Classical Antiquity in various periods of the development of Polish and European culture. Starting in 2002, the structure of OBTA included undergraduate studies in Modern Greek Philology, organized by Professor Małgorzata Borowska, which were deeply imbued with Mediterranean contents.<sup>2</sup> These studies constituted yet another important impulse to proceed toward elaborating an interdisciplinary culture-related formula for Mediterranean Studies, one which would comprehensively cover the most important civilizational processes of the Mediterranean by their chronological development, from Antiquity to the present day, thus emphasizing the role of ancient Mediterranean Graeco-Roman culture in the shaping of European and Euro-Atlantic civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> Binding since October 2012 following certain modifications connected with implementing the regulations of the National Qualification Framework.

<sup>2</sup> See Małgorzata Borowska’s paper *Hellenic Studies*, p. 99, in the present volume.

Initially, Cultural Studies, which since the mid-1990s have developed very rapidly at Polish state and private universities, were not yet based on any ministerial standards of education. As the said standards were approved not until 2005, in the times mentioned it was the originality of the idea and the enthusiasm of the milieu that counted most.



“Open Door” event at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” University of Warsaw Library, April 20, 2013. Prof. Małgorzata Borowska with students of Mediterranean Civilization and Modern Greek Philology, from the left: Małgorzata Dobrzycka, Krzysztof Rybak, Anna Nadrowska-Napiórkowska, Wiktoria Warzec

From the very beginning, the intention of the Management Body of OBTA was to create a reliable formula for Mediterranean Studies, one which would not only ensure thorough knowledge on the development of Mediterranean Civilization, but which would also be deeply rooted in the methodology of Cultural Studies and in its conscious application for the purpose of analyzing and describing civilizational phenomena. In our discussions on the formula for these studies, we also did our very best to



elaborate the programme in such a manner as to ensure that they would open certain professional perspectives for future graduates, through developing competences that would be professionally useful in several fields of cultural and social life, in state and EU institutions, in the media, education, advertising, diplomacy, and public relations agencies. Consultations concerning the formula for the studies were carried out by a group of culture experts at the Institute of Polish Culture of the Faculty of Polish Studies at the University of Warsaw, experts on literature, sociologists, philosophers, historians, and art historians. Many of these people were later invited by the Management of OBTA to implement the curriculum of Mediterranean Studies, as approved by the Senate of the University of Warsaw.

The concept of Mediterranean Studies, extremely attractive as an idea for academic education, is factually anchored in the civilizational output of ancient Graeco-Roman culture and it is from this culture that it derives its primary values. Classical Antiquity unchangeably remains the starting point for all analyses of the most significant cultural phenomena connected with the traditions of the Mediterranean. It is worth noting, however, that the term “Mediterranean” has no counterpart in the world of ancient terms. The Latin noun *mediterraneum*, which is the base of such contemporary Italian or Spanish names as: *il mediterraneo*, *el mediterráneo*, means an area far from the sea, in the middle of the land, and only as an adjective, combined with the noun *mare* – sea – does it become the geographical and cultural term: *Mare Mediterraneum* – the Mediterranean Sea – the cradle of numerous interpenetrating and consecutive great civilizations. Thus, the constitutive element of the term is the sea – *mare*, *thalassa* (θάλασσα), understood as the place where the currents of old civilizations concentrated and interspersed, and as the source of civilizational interactions oriented at the peoples settled in the middle of the land.

Obviously, the Mediterranean is not only the azure depths of the waters (*caeruleum mare*), marked by the crisscrossing trails of mythical heroes, or war or merchant expeditions, but also the wide, densely populated and strongly urbanized littoral with numerous harbours and with peninsulas that cut deeply into the sea from the north, creating regional sea basins. It also boasts isles and islands to the east which add variety to the area. It is

within these lands and waters that ancient Mediterranean civilization was born, a civilization, in whose shaping the greatest role was played by small (at least originally) state and urban organisms situated along the coastline and on islands.

To the east, the Mediterranean was the Greek poleis (πόλεις) dispersed along the western coast of Asia Minor and the city-states of the Aegean Islands and continental Greece, with the significance of the Athenian polis (πόλις) for the spiritual and political culture being invaluable. To the south, it was Minoan Crete with its labyrinth palaces, while still further to the south it was the ancient Phoenician cities of Tyre and Sidon, inhabited by the Greeks' rival "elder brothers" when it comes to the colonization of the Western Mediterranean, including both north-western Africa and Spain.

Thus, to the west, the trend was set by Phoenician and Greek colonies on Spanish coasts, Greek colonies in southern Gallia, southern Italy, and Sicily, and the mysterious Etruria on the north-western coast of the Apennine Peninsula. During the first five centuries of its polity, the Italian Roma – founded in the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. at the estuary of the Tiber, in the region of Lazio (Latium) – remained uninterested in the Mediterranean Sea, then dominated by the Phoenicians, the Greeks, and the Etruscans. Instead, Rome was stubbornly focused on the conquest of the peninsula. Nonetheless, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C., having attained political domination over the entirety of Italy, Rome became the greatest power in the Western Mediterranean. The elimination of the danger from Phoenician Carthage changed the previously strange Mare Magnum into Rome's own inland sea – Mare Internum – and within just two centuries.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., Greece emerges from the so-called "Dark Ages" to create, over the next four centuries, the basic organizational framework of universal Mediterranean civilization in the political, literary, scientific, philosophical, and artistic dimensions. The greatest ethical and artistic authority in ancient Mediterranean civilization was Homer. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* constituted the most reliable standard for human behaviour for both the ancient Greeks and Romans: it was in Homer's works that they found the canonical patterns of the way of acting and the aesthetic pleasure that resulted from listening to beautiful poetic words put together in a

harmoniously composed heroic content. Although Homer was the teacher of all Greeks, ancient Greece had one more universal mentor – namely, Athens. The scope of civil liberties varied among the Greek poleis. What is more, in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, tyranny was a commonplace, even in Athens. However, tyranny was finally defeated and classical Athenian democracy, although not devoid of extremism and degeneration, became a universal model of civil society, and this created good conditions for the unlimited development of sciences and arts. Not only did ancient Greek political thought create the structure of the ancient polis, with the public space of the agora (ἀγορά), but it also shaped great empires which went on to disseminate Mediterranean civilization. It was owing to the empire of Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic kingdoms founded upon its collapse that Greek culture reached as far as Afghanistan and India. Great scientific, research, and cultural institutions systematically described and classified all that was created by Greek mental powers and creative talents, thus building strong foundations for practicing the sciences as we do today. Greek philosophy, the greatest product of Greek intellectualism, was not merely a historical school of the culture of thinking, but also an inexhaustible source of inspiration for the next generations of intellectuals. Greek works of literature, visual arts, and architecture constitute an independent, and often unique, manifestation of the Greek creative genius. Nonetheless, as a result of archaeological discoveries – especially those that uncover more and more facts about the ancient Hittites in Asia Minor – many of the traditional theses concerning Greek Mediterranean civilization need to be verified today. However, what was included in the sources written since the era of Homer and found with the monuments of Greek material culture bears the sign of such far-reaching processing in the Greek spirit that it is really difficult to indicate a specific non-Greek source of inspiration, even with thorough comparative studies.

So far, while talking about the development and countenance of Mediterranean civilization, our main focus has been on Greek civilization. This is basically correct, as it was above all the Greeks who created this world in the cultural dimension, and so it is they who are particularly noteworthy. They determined the dynamics of the world and shaped its heritage to a

larger extent than any other nation. Pursuing perfection in each area and creating the canons of all the arts, they determined their perception by people of the epochs to come. Thus, Greek achievements constitute the most important segment of the process that formed ancient Mediterranean civilization.



Students of Mediterranean Civilization, Modern Greek Philology, and MISH at a Christmas meeting, Conference Room, Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Nowy Świat St. 69

But where are those practical Romans, ever seeking power-play solutions? Between the First Punic War and the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C., the Roman Empire, built within the territories of both the Western and Eastern Mediterranean, politically absorbed the areas of Alexander the Great’s former monarchy, from Mesopotamia to Egypt and Greece, where the roots of Greek Mediterranean civilization were the deepest. Earlier, the Romans had subdued the wealthy Greek colonies in southern Italy and on Sicily. In this manner, almost the entire Greek oecumene (οἰκουμένη) became incorporated into the territory of the Roman state and, as

I mentioned before, the Mediterranean Sea became an inland Roman sea (Mare Internum). For the peoples of its Empire, Rome ensured unrestricted economic and cultural exchange and for several centuries Rome spread the famous Roman peace (pax Romana) across the vast lands between the Atlantic Ocean and Mesopotamia.

Rome did not resist the Greeks' cultural superiority. Its own culture, both in the literary and philosophical dimension, is the result of Hellenization, which quickly progressed from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. This idea was clearly and overtly expressed by Horace in his letter to Augustus (Epist. II 1, 156-157): "Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes / intulit agresti Latio" ("Greece, the captive, made her savage victor captive, and brought the arts into rustic Latium"<sup>3</sup>). Masses of Greek slaves came to Rome, many of them well educated, and they revived Roman interest in Greek spiritual and literary culture. Some of them were the teachers and housemasters of the sons of Roman aristocrats, and they initiated Latin literary creation. Obviously, Greek works of art and Greek libraries were brought to Rome as well, as the fruit of plundering the provinces conquered. The Romans assimilated Greek literary and philosophical traditions. What is more, well-educated Roman elites acknowledged these traditions as their own. Nevertheless, the purely national trend quickly made its presence felt: imitatio – creative imitation – turned into aemulatio – cultural competitiveness, the pursuit of shaping Rome's own canons of art and works of literature. As people of action, the Romans passionately cultivated heroic epics, historiography, elocution, and moral philosophy. They accepted the Greek education model, known as enkyklios paideia (ἐγκύκλιος παιδεία) – a diversified general education based on the system of seven liberal arts (grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music), and which therefore focused on formal linguistic and rhetoric education. This system did not aim at educating professionals in practical skills, especially since both the Greeks and the Romans disregarded manual labour, having cheap labour in abundance in the form of

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<sup>3</sup> Trans. Henry Rushton Fairclough in Horace, *Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, London–Cambridge, Massachusetts 1942, p. 409.

slaves. Instead, the system focused on versatile development of the mind and body and on working out brilliant intellectual skills, in the spirit of the Greek *kalokagathia* (καλοκαγαθία) and the Roman *mos maiorum*. The Romans' fondness for law, order, and hard facts was fundamental for the elaboration of any and all codes of both public and private law<sup>4</sup> and of the canons of monumental architecture and realistic sculpture. Finally, the Romans built genuine roads – indeed, a whole road system which ensured an efficient transportation system for the Empire. This was one of the greatest of civilizational achievements.

Mediterranean water routes, which used to be the basic routes of exchange of culture-related ideas, were now extended by Roman roads, along which Greek Mediterranean civilization – processed and enriched by the Romans – was brought to distinct peoples of the barbarian North and West. Roman roads strengthened civilization in the East, for centuries occupied by Greeks who did not build many land routes, but developed their culture mainly in seaside metropolises. The Roman legal space, the Roman administrative system, and, finally, their extensive road system created factual organizational frameworks for the development of Mediterranean civilization and made it a universal civilization within the huge territories of the East and the West, from Mesopotamia to the Atlantic Ocean. Mediterranean civilization was brought to these distant areas following the huge idea for unification born in Italy, i.e., the idea of *Roma aeterna* – eternal Rome and its culture, the providential role of the *Imperium Romanum*, predestined to rule the world. The idea – still vital in the declining years of Antiquity, despite the calamities striking the country – largely contributed to the cultural persistence of the Christian form of Mediterranean civilization in the Byzantine East for the next one thousand years. Moreover, owing to how the Catholic Church assumed a civilizational mission, it also helped the Latin West, dominated by barbaric Germanic kingdoms, to recover from the cultural collapse. The Catholic Church was the only institution born in ancient times to survive the fall of the Western Roman

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<sup>4</sup> See also Witold Wołodkiewicz's paper *Roman Law at OBTA*, p. 91, in the present volume.

Empire, and it passed many of the treasures of the ancient Greeks and Romans' intellectual culture to Western Europe in its actions and teaching. It should be mentioned that the purely political idea of the eternity of Rome expired relatively recently, i.e., in 1806, when Napoleon forced Francis II, the Habsburg monarch, to resign from the title of Roman Emperor.

One could deliberate for hours on the genius and original achievements of Mediterranean Antiquity, and how they contribute to our European and Western identity. In fact, any question concerning the origins of numerous phenomena of Europe's political and spiritual culture would lead us to the realm of ancient Graeco-Roman civilization. The intention of this broad "ancient" digression was, first of all, to present the values of ancient Mediterranean civilization which are characterized by the so-called civilizational long term (*longue durée*) and the ability to revive and to inspire human minds in changing cultural and political conditions. The idea was to present Mediterranean civilization as a "force that nourishes" (Tadeusz Zieliński<sup>5</sup>) our contemporary humanistic way of thinking, something which constitutes the basic segment of Mediterranean Studies at the University.

Within the curriculum of Mediterranean Studies implemented since 2004, the ancient segment fills the entire first year of undergraduate studies, alongside general cultural and general university courses. Students get to know ancient Mediterranean culture in its most significant aspects: the social and political, the literary, philosophical, artistic, and legal. They also study the classical languages of Latin and Greek (Greek finally became a facultative subject, alternative for Nahuatl<sup>6</sup>) along with a chosen modern Mediterranean language. In subsequent years of study, they are advised of the development of Mediterranean civilization in the following epochs of European history, from the Middle Ages to this very day. They study not only the changing forms of Western Latin civilization in the multi-faceted

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<sup>5</sup> See Tadeusz Zieliński, *Świat antyczny a my*, Zygmunt Pomarański i Spółka, Zamość 1922, lecture V, p. 95 (lectures held by the scholar at the Saint Petersburg University in 1901).

<sup>6</sup> See Justyna Olko's paper *About Cross-Cultural Encounters and Academic Freedom*, p. 165, in the present volume.

and interdisciplinary dimension, but also Eastern, Byzantine-Orthodox, and Modern Greek civilizations. Moreover, lectures and seminars devoted to Islam and Judaism constitute an important supplement to the picture of the Mediterranean civilization.

The curriculum of undergraduate studies was significantly updated in 2008. The updates consisted in full adjustment of the curriculum to the requirements of the Bologna Process, which stipulates that the curriculum of undergraduate studies should cover the whole of issues connected with a given course of studies. The curriculum of undergraduate Mediterranean Studies in force until 2008 lacked courses related to modern culture of the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, which were generally lectured at master level studies as – when the field of study was being established – both levels of studies were considered complementary. In line with the new regulations set forth in the Bologna Declaration, they are to be treated as separate – thus the necessity to introduce changes. Two new seminars were introduced in the curriculum of year three of the first cycle studies: *History of the 18<sup>th</sup>- and 19<sup>th</sup>-century Art* and *Modern Art of Mediterranean Countries*. Concurrently, new “paths” were introduced also into the curriculum, starting from year two of undergraduate studies, connected with individual interests of the students and with the diploma seminar of year three of the studies on the culture of the Western, Central, and Eastern Mediterranean. The paths (one of which is elective) are in the form of courses devoted to the history of the culture of each region. These courses systematize and order the students’ knowledge of the times between the Middle Ages and our own time. The selection of the courses proposed includes: *History of Iberian Culture*, *History of French and Italian Culture* and *History of Balkan and Greek Culture*. The courses were first implemented in the academic year 2010/2011. Earlier, issues related to the civilization of the regions mentioned were only present in the curriculum of master-level studies. The thematic choice concerning regional cultures was extended, also in academic year 2010/2011, by the Ibero-American path, entitled *The Mediterranean Overseas*.

From the very beginning, second cycle studies were particularly focused on culture-related issues concerning the contemporary Iberian,



French, Italian, Balkan, and Greek Mediterranean regions. The curriculum is realized through specialized classes in the form of lectures, like *History of Mediterranean* (with a focus on contemporary times), *Introduction to Regional Studies*, *Selected Issues of Culture of Regions*, seminars carried out in the languages of individual regions by foreign lecturers, and MA seminars on contemporary culture of the regions.



Cover of “Omphalos” – a journal published by the Mediterranean Students Club at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales”

Obviously, there is also a wide range of seminars on ancient culture, the reception of Classical Antiquity in our contemporary culture, the Mediterranean Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Baroque, and the Enlightenment, both in the European and Old Polish perspectives – all of which are targeted at students interested in ancient Mediterranean cultures.

The content of the curricula of the first and second cycle Mediterranean Studies allows students to develop the creative capability to discern, describe, and define culture-related problems in an interdisciplinary perspective, as well as to apply the modern culture-related methodologies with great awareness. It is extremely important to form an attitude of respect towards the traditions and contemporaneity of Mediterranean culture, as well as an attitude of openness to its diversification. The aforementioned is connected with the capacity to analyze and interpret various cultural texts in their original forms, to read their meaning in specific historical realities, and to prove the long term of the ideas included therein, to use the knowledge of Mediterranean culture obtained during these studies for clarifying the relations between the main currents of European and, in particular, of Polish culture and the heritage of Graeco-Roman Antiquity. These studies develop the ability to pose research problems on one's own, as well as to integrate the knowledge of different realms in order to express and justify one's point of view and one's own way of seeing civilization phenomena. Thanks to these studies, students are able to make use of their advanced knowledge of foreign languages, both classical ones (Latin and – optional – Ancient Greek) and modern ones: Mediterranean (choice among French, Italian, Modern Greek, Spanish) – necessary for thorough studies of the cultures of the regions – and English. Finally, these studies develop an attitude of readiness to deepen one's already acquired knowledge and brush up one's skills in continuing education.

I am convinced that the prospects for Mediterranean Studies at the University of Warsaw's Faculty of "Artes Liberales" are propitious. For instance, because of the number of candidates interested in our studies curricula we have had to double the number of admissions. Owing to the abundant scholarship offer, students can also apply for internships and scholarships at German, Spanish, Italian, and Greek universities. Not only does this favour the acquisition of thorough knowledge and obtaining additional competences, but also adds to the attractiveness of Mediterranean Studies in the context of students' future employability. This is possible owing to the broad, interdisciplinary character of these studies, targeted at the development of flexible competences that increase our graduates'

chances for succeeding on the labour market.<sup>7</sup> In fact, our graduates are aware that the Mediterranean entails a heritage whose impact extends well beyond the region's geographical boundaries – and this permits our students to take a broad view of culture generally. The young people who commence their academic life at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” become competent in conducting dialogue that respects the diversity of participants and their differing historical and cultural identity. And this is exceptionally important in times such as ours, typified as they are by the ever greater scope of international cooperation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Curricula are accessible online: <http://www.cs.al.uw.edu.pl/> (consulted: Oct. 23, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> See also the graduate's profile on the website for the UW Internet Registration of Candidates office: [https://irk.uw.edu.pl/katalog.php?op=info&id=40180000&change\\_lang=en](https://irk.uw.edu.pl/katalog.php?op=info&id=40180000&change_lang=en) (consulted: Oct. 23, 2013).

## THE DANTISCUS PROGRAMME

**T**HE DANTISCUS PROGRAMME, as we might call the *Registration and Publication of the Correspondence of Ioannes Dantiscus (1485–1548)*, is made up of projects implemented at various stages, including *Correspondence by Ioannes Dantiscus* and *Inventory of Renaissance Correspondence*. It also encompasses editorial work on texts written by Ioannes Dantiscus (in Polish: Jan Dantyszek), along with other sources related to him.

### Why Dantiscus?

The correspondence of the outstanding humanist and poet Ioannes Dantiscus, the most prominent Polish diplomat of the Golden Age, constitutes the biggest collection of humanistic correspondence in East-Central Europe (6,143 letters, ca. 13,000 source documents). The collection (55% of the letters are in Latin, 41% in German, 4% in other languages) records the relations of Polish kings with the entirety of Europe. Dantiscus stayed at the court of Charles I, the later Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, both in Spain and in Italy, and in Germany and the Netherlands. His correspondence constitutes an invaluable source for examining the European humanistic *Respublica Litteraria*, and expressively depicts the involvement of Poland and other East-Central European countries in the scope of that community's cooperation.

The correspondence of Dantiscus therefore defines the place of Poland and Polish diplomacy in Renaissance Europe, providing valuable informa-

tion on the then cultural and intellectual elite, spiritually joined together as they were by Latinity (*Latinitas*) and Christianity (*Christianitas*). What is more, the correspondence of Dantiscus written in German, almost untouched in previous research (ca. 2,600 letters), casts new light on the political, economic, and cultural Polish-Prussian-German borderlands, as well as on intra-Christian contacts in the era of rising confessionalization.



IOANNES DANTISÆS. EPISCOPVS CVLMENSIS.

Ioannes Dantiscus, anonymous copperplate, 16<sup>th</sup> (17<sup>th</sup>) c.,  
dim. 167 x 117 mm

The introduction of Dantiscus' correspondence into circulation, through publication of the inventory of his correspondence and the first full-text edition of all his letters, is the main research objective of the Laboratory for Editing Sources at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales" at the University of Warsaw. Besides Dantiscus' correspondence, the scope of the editorial work also encompasses envoy speeches, memorials, poems, documents, and other (sparse) texts by Dantiscus, as well as sources related to him. Their collection will lead to carrying out a more distant aim – namely, a monograph on Dantiscus.

In the introduction to one of the volumes of the "Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci" series, its originator and academic editor, Jerzy Axer, described the reasons why the testimony of Dantiscus is important:

The idea to publish Dantiscus' correspondence, launched almost a quarter of a century ago by the scholarly community who have been since carrying on this task, evolved significantly from the point of view of priorities and motivation able to ensure a faithful continuation of this great effort. At first, we wanted to achieve the goal set by Professor Kazimierz Kumaniecki as a key task for Polish neolatinists.<sup>1</sup> Within a short time, we realized that it was a mission for more than one generation of scholars.

Such a charge appeared attractive at that historical moment mainly because the space-time of Dantiscus' letters shows an interesting affinity with the mood of the 1990s, a period of transformations within the European space tempting scholars to seek in the past similar eras and processes. The age of brilliant successes of Poland under the Jagellons and the integration of Polish elites into the humanistic and political discourse of the *Respublica Litteraria Europaea* match to a certain degree what we felt at the time. Reading Dantiscus' letters we saw then, most of all, the dialogue

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<sup>1</sup> Kumaniecki was given this mission by Kazimierz Morawski, see Jerzy Axer, *Zakład edytorstwa łacińskiego i greckiego Instytutu Filologii Klasycznej Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego*, "Informationes. Biuletyn Papieskiego Instytutu Studiów Kościelnych" 5 (1991), pp. 63-71; see also Kazimierz Morawski, *Czasy Zygmuntołskie na tle prądów Odrodzenia*, PIW, Warszawa, 1965 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), pp. 65, 66, 160 [...] (footnote taken from the quoted text).

between what was distinctly Polish and what was European. It was a captivating exercise to compare the early 16<sup>th</sup>-century process of transformation of a periphery into the Eastern European borderland with Poland moving to take its place on the eastern border of the European Union.<sup>2</sup>

Today that ad hoc motivation has been replaced by a fascination with the idea of an autonomous community of intellectuals committed to political activity and striving to maintain a maximum of intellectual freedom. Their relations with the authorities, when faced with the role of advisor and/or functionary, relied, most of all, on attempts to find an ethical equilibrium. Their dilemmas may provide an important and interesting point of reference to contemporary intellectuals seeking their own place in society. Dantiscus' correspondence, treated above all as a source for traditional historiography – with an emphasis on documenting connections between Poland and Europe – reveals more and more its value and importance for cultural research and for studying history of ideas in the context of the role of elites in the European tradition.<sup>3</sup>

### **Ioannes Dantiscus. Biographical Note<sup>4</sup>**

Ioannes Dantiscus (1485–1548) – Johann von Höfen, Johann Flachsbinder, Ioannes De Curiis, Linodesmon – was a Neo-Latin poet, diplomat of Poland's King Sigismund I the Old and Queen Bona Sforza and, in the

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<sup>2</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Entre el ayer y el mañana*, "Nueva Revista" 1 (1990), p. 53 and Jerzy Axer, *Juan Dantisco y la Res Publica Litteraria Europaea*, in *Humanismo y pervivencia del mundo clasico. Homenaje al Profesor Luis Gil*, eds. José Maestre Maestre, Joaquín Pascual Barea, Luis Charlo Brea, vol. II.3, Ayuntamiento de Alcañiz, Cadiz 1997, pp. 1397–1404 (footnote taken from the quoted text).

<sup>3</sup> Jerzy Axer, *Preface*, in *Respublica Litteraria in Action: Religion and Politics*, in the series "Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci", part 5: "Respublica Litteraria in Action," vol. 2, ed. Anna Skolimowska with collaboration of Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun, IBI AL–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow, 2012, pp. 8–9.

<sup>4</sup> The Dantiscus biographical note is a modified version of the text published on the Internet as *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Texts & Correspondence*, eds. Anna Skolimowska, Magdalena Turska with collaboration of Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun, Jan. 1, 2010, <http://dantiscus.al.uw.edu.pl> (consulted: Nov. 11, 2012).

final years of his life, Bishop of Kulm (in Polish: Chełmno, 1530–1537) and Bishop of Ermland (in Polish: Warmia, 1537–1548) in Royal Prussia.

Dantiscus was born in Gdańsk, to the German-speaking bourgeois von Höfen family, known also by the nickname Flachsbinder. The Polish toponym *Dantyszek* is the translation of the word Dantiscus – ‘coming from Gdańsk’ (in Latin: Dantiscum or Gedanum).



Christoph Weiditz, boxwood model of Ioannes Dantiscus' order, 1529,  $\varnothing$  63 mm,  
recto: Dantiscus' bust, verso: Dantiscus' coat of arms

Having graduated from his parish school at the end of 1499/beginning of 1500, Dantiscus studied at the University of Greifswald. In the years 1500–1503 (with breaks) he obtained education at the Cracow Academy where, having passed exams in the trivium, he was granted the baccalaureate. In later years, his mentor was the Neo-Latin poet and humanist, Paweł of Krosno, professor of literature at the Cracow Academy.

As early as 1500, Dantiscus started his career at the court of King John I Albert (r. 1492–1501). In the years 1501–1503, he was a scribe in the chambers of the following two Great Chancellors of the Kingdom of Poland – Krzesław of Kurozwęki and Jan Łaski. In 1502, Dantiscus took part in war against the Tatars and Wallachians. In 1504, he was appointed



as scribe at the royal chancellery of King Alexander Jagiellon (r. 1501–1506).

In November 1505, Dantiscus was granted a subsidy by the king, to be able to continue studies in Italy. From Gdańsk, he travelled through Denmark and Germany to Venice. Once there, he suddenly felt compelled to alter his plans and, instead of commencing studies at one of the universities in Italy, he sailed via Corfu, the Peloponnese, Crete, Rhodes, and Cyprus to Jaffa. His aim was that of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. And so it happened: he visited Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Mount Sinai and travelled to the borders of Arabia. On his way back, he visited Sicily, Naples, and Campania. He returned to the royal court of Sigismund I in February 1507 – the first year of the king's reign on the Polish throne.

Between 1507 and 1515, as a clerk for Prussian issues at the court of Sigismund I, Dantiscus was an envoy to Prussian towns and assemblies. In 1515, Dantiscus took part in the meeting of four Central European monarchs – Emperor Maximilian and the kings: Sigismund, Ladislaus, and Louis Jagiellon, in Pressburg and Vienna – at King Sigismund I's side. During the convention, he became the secretary of the Polish diplomatic mission at the imperial court. From that moment on his diplomatic career lasted uninterruptedly until 1532. In the years 1515–1517, together with Polish diplomats, he stayed at the court of Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor. Within that period, he travelled three times to Venice (November 1515, February 1516, July 1516) to mediate in talks between the emperor and the senate of Venice. He was then made a nobleman and obtained the doctor of both laws title (*doctor utriusque iuris*), the count palatine title (*comes palatinus*), and the *poeta laureatus* title. At the beginning of 1517, together with the emperor's court, he stayed in the Netherlands, where he participated in negotiations concerning the marriage of the Polish king to Burgundian duchess Eleonora.

In August 1517, he returned to Poland. At the end of 1518 he departed for another two years. During his first independent diplomatic mission, he visited Austria, Switzerland, and Spain, negotiating – at the courts of Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor, and Charles I, King of Spain – the authorization of the testament of Joanna IV, Queen of Naples and the

grandmother of the Polish Queen Bona Sforza. Having returned to Poland during war with the Teutonic Knights in the years 1520–1521, he stayed in the war camp with King Sigismund I.



Ioannes Dantiscus' superexlibris, 1539, stamped on the cover of *Novum Testamentum ex Erasmi Roterodami recognitione – adiecta vulgata translatione*, Joannes Frobenius, Basileae 1527

In May 1522, Dantiscus left for the court of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, for another two-year long legation to deal with Prussian and Turkish issues and the Italian heritage of Queen Bona Sforza. He travelled through Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, England, and Spain, meeting Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, Cardinal Matthäus Lang, Henry VIII King of England, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, Margaret of Austria –

Governor of Habsburg Netherlands – and King Christian II, banished from Denmark. He made a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela and, taking the opportunity to stay in the vicinity of Wittenberg, held private talks with the German reformers: Martin Luther, Philipp Melancthon, Justus Jonas, and Simon Grynaeus. He came back to Poland in July 1523.

As soon as in March 1524, accompanied by the chancellor of the queen, Ludovico Alifio, he set off on the next diplomatic journey which, this time, lasted eight years. The first destination was Bari – the Italian estate of Isabella of Aragon, the mother of Queen Bona Sforza, who passed away in February 1524. Having left Alifio in Naples, Dantiscus went to the Spanish court, to obtain the official confirmation of Bona's rights to the legacy. He remained at the court of Charles V for the next seven years, performing the function of a permanent representative of Poland who, with varying luck, did his best to introduce order in the testamental issues of Bona and carried out negotiations in cases entrusted to him on a day-to-day basis like, e.g., secularization of the Teutonic Knights or Turkish issues. His diplomatic activity was valued highly by the Polish royal court and the emperor's court.

Dantiscus returned to Poland for good in July 1532. The last episode in his diplomatic career was the legation, in 1538, to the Roman King, Ferdinand Habsburg, in the company of the Poznań Voivode, Janusz Latański, concerning the marriage of the successor of Sigismund the Old, Sigismund II, to Elizabeth of Austria.

While performing his official functions, Dantiscus established extensive contacts in the world of academic research and culture of Renaissance Europe. His fondness of fun was already famous in his Cracow period when, together with friends, he actively participated in court entertainments. He believed, probably rightly, that establishing personal contacts with the great people of his world was one of the main tasks of a diplomat, so he eagerly combined diplomatic activity with a rich social life. The friendships started in the years of Dantiscus' diplomatic legations and lasted long after his return to Poland, e.g., friendship with the imperial diplomats Cornelis De Schepper and Sigmund von Herberstein, Christian II's chancellor Godschalk Ericksen, the Spanish humanist Alfonso de

Valdés, philologists such as Jan van Campen, Lazaro Bonamico, Conrad Goclenius, the geographer and astronomer Gemma Frisius, the German poet Helius Eobanus Hessus, the banker Anton Fugger, factors of the Welzers' bank: Albrecht Cuon, Hieronymus Sailer, and Heinrich Ehinger, and even the Spanish conqueror of the New World, Hernán Cortés, as well as many other personages of the political, cultural, and economic elite of the time. These friendships were continued for many years through correspondence. The list of Dantiscus' correspondents known to us today includes about six hundred and fifty names, among which are Erasmus of Rotterdam (although Dantiscus probably never met him in person) and Nicolaus Copernicus, the canon priest of Ermland, more widely known for his achievements in astronomy.

Dantiscus was valued by his contemporaries as a Neo-Latin poet. His poetic output dates back to his student days. Throughout his life, he wrote works in various poetic genres – epigrams, elegies, epithalamia, silvae, occasional poems, and epitaphs. Just like his letters, his poems also cover a variety of topics – court life, erotica, politics, history, mythology, autobiographical elements, and, finally, theology. Also worth noting are his occasional verses, which are to be treated as a special type of a “poetical journalism,” circulating in the forms of manuscripts and printed copies. In them Dantiscus presented his own views on current political affairs. For instance, *De virtutis et fortunae differentia somnium* (1510), published in the first volume of Dantiscus poems; *Epithalamium Sigismundi et Barbarae*, concerning the marriage of the Polish King Sigismund I to Barbara Zápolya (1512); *De victoria Sigismundi*, the poem about the victory of the Polish king over Moscow in the battle of Orsza (1514); *Epithalamium reginae Bonae*, written on occasion of the marriage of the Polish King Sigismund I with Bona Sforza d' Aragona (1518); *De nostrorum temporum calamitatibus silva*, on the coronation of Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor (1530); and the autobiographic poem *De vita Ioannis Dantisci* (ca. 1534), can serve as examples here. Towards the end of Dantiscus' life, a collection of his religious hymns was published: *Hymni aliquot ecclesiastici, variis versuum generibus, de Quadragesimae Ieiunio, et sex eius diebus Dominicus, deque horis Canonicis Christi Passionis tempore. Et de Resurrectione*,

*Ascensione, Spiritus sancti missione, Matreque gloriosissima Maria Virgine, recens aediti* (1548).

As for his prose, apart from his abundant correspondence and a report from the Battle of Obertin, published in the form of a letter (*Victoria Serenissimi Poloniae Regis contra Voieuodam Moldaviae Turcae tributarium et subditum parta 22 Augusti 1531*), it encompasses mainly certain envoy speeches, memorials, and several dozen official documents.

As a reward for his diplomatic activity, Dantiscus received church benefices. In 1521, he became the parish priest of Gołęb; in 1523, the parish priest of the Church of the Holy Virgin Mary in Gdańsk; in 1529, he was granted the Kulm canonry; and in 1530, the Kulm bishopric (ordained as a higher priest in March 1533, consecrated as Kulm bishop on Sept. 14, 1533). In December 1536, Dantiscus was designated as coadjutor of Ermland to become the bishop of Ermland in 1537 (Sept. 20 – election; Dec. 18 – official ingress). Dantiscus held this office until his death in 1548.

Dantiscus stayed in touch with the initiators and supporters of church reforms – as I already mentioned, he knew Luther and Melanchthon personally and exchanged correspondence with the latter for many years and he maintained good relations with the ruler and the intellectual elites of Ducal Prussia – however, as a church official in Prussia he sharply counteracted the spread of the Reformation.

Royal Prussia, where Dantiscus' bishoprics were situated, was then a region with a special status in Poland. It was a Polish province formed from a part of the Teutonic Order as a result of the Second Toruń Peace Treaty after the Thirteen Years' War (1454–1466). It consisted of Pomerania as centred on Gdańsk, the Lands of Kulm and Michałowo, the Ermland Duchy, and the region of Marienburg (in Polish: Malbork) and Elbing (in Polish: Elbląg). By 1569, Royal Prussia had significant internal autonomy, with its own Parliament composed of an Assembly and Council, its own Treasury, and its own coin with the emblem of Prussia. The bishop of Ermland was the ex officio chairman of the Prussian Assembly and Council and the Kulm bishop was his deputy. In performing his function, Dantiscus became the most prominent persona in local politics and, at the same time,

the main intermediary in the Royal Prussian Council's contacts with the court of Sigismund I. He represented the Council at the Diet (in Polish: Sejm) of the Kingdom in 1536/1537, and at the ceremonies of the marriage of royal offspring – princess Jadwiga Jagiellon with the Brandenburg margrave Joachim II (1535), and of the King Sigismund II August Jagiellon with Elisabeth Habsburg in Cracow (1543). He also maintained animated contacts with the court of Prussia's Duke Albrecht Hohenzollern. Copies of fragments of the correspondence received by Dantiscus from all over Europe, which he attached to his letters to Albrecht, were often a source of information for the prince on current political affairs.

As bishop of Kulm and Ermland, Dantiscus also contributed to the development of education in his dioceses. He was an effective patron of the restitution of the deteriorating school in Kulm into a new, Catholic school in the humanities, the high standards of which aimed to bring it on a par with rival Protestant schools. A few years after Dantiscus' death, in 1554, the school in Kulm was transformed into the academy which functioned, with short intervals, until 1814. Dantiscus turned Heilsberg (in Polish: Lidzbark Warmiński) into a cultural centre. He founded the episcopal library, collected works of art (paintings, sculptures, beautiful and valuable utility items), kept artists at the bishop's court (e.g., the painter Hans Heffner), supported publications of his friends' works (e.g., of Jan van Campen). He also funded foreign scholarships for talented young people (e.g., received by Eustachius Knobelsdorf – a burger from Heilsberg and later canon priest of Ermland, and Stanisław Aichler, patrician of Cracow, future lawyer).

His brothers Georg and Bernhard took part in Dantiscus' diplomatic travels, as members of the legation suite. During his term as bishop Dantiscus took care of his cousins (Caspar and Johann Hannau, Johann Lehmann, Johann von Höfen Hartowski), paying for their education. Being the eldest son, Dantiscus funded his mother's tombstone.

While in Spain (1519, 1522–1523, 1524–1529), Dantiscus started an informal family in Valladolid – he consorted with Isabel Delgada, with whom he had a daughter, Juana Dantisca (1527–after 1592) and a son, Juan (1529–ca. 1531). For several years after the children were born, Dantiscus

took care of them and their mother through friends. Later, as a result of various misunderstandings, their contacts were broken off. Nevertheless, the family line developed proudly. From among the more than dozen children of Juana Dantisca and her husband, imperial secretary, Diego Gracián de Alderete, four sons are counted among the outstanding Spanish humanists: Antonio Gracián was a trusted royal secretary and librarian of the King of Spain Philip II; Jeronimo Gracián was a theologian, a mystic writer, reformer of the Carmelite Order, and confessor to St. Teresa of Ávila; Lucas Gracián was a writer who greatly contributed to Spanish literature through the adaptation of Giovanni della Casa's *Galateo overo de' costumi* (*El Galateo Español*), and was also the court chaplain and the royal notary; Thomas Gracián was a royal secretary and a translator from French. Owing to their father, Diego Gracián de Alderete, the last literary work by Dantiscus – the already mentioned collection *Hymni aliquot ecclesiastici* – was published three times in Spain.

Dantiscus died in Heilsberg on October 27, 1548. He probably left no will and the documents preserved show that his assets were split between his siblings in Prussia and the Ermland chapter.

### **From the Works on the Legacy of Dantiscus**

The legacy of Dantiscus – in particular, his letters and poems – were the object of scholarly interest almost from the very moment of their creation. It is worth recalling that already in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the correspondence of Dantiscus (especially from the period of his diplomatic activity) was treated in a special way by Stanisław Górski (ca. 1497–1572), the author of *Acta Tomiciana* – a twenty-seven-volume collection of cartularies, illustrating the reign of King Sigismund I. In the first version of his works, Górski devoted an entire separate volume to the correspondence of Dantiscus,<sup>5</sup> whereas the remaining letters and documents were chronologically divided into volumes. The said correspondence was also included in the large-scale programme of copying sources to the history of Poland, undertaken in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by the outstanding author, poet, and historian

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<sup>5</sup> See the Jagiellonian Library, MS 6557.

who served Stanisław August Poniatowski – Adam Naruszewicz (known as *Teki Naruszewicza* [*Naruszewicz Files*]).<sup>6</sup> Rich material in the form of lists and excerpts from the correspondence of Dantiscus can be found in the legacy of two scholars from the 20<sup>th</sup> century – namely, the archivist from Cracow Antoni Marian Kurpiel<sup>7</sup> and the Belgian historian Henry De Vocht.<sup>8</sup> Kurpiel, who carried out research on Dantiscus under the aegis of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAU), intended to write an extensive monograph on this figure, but his work was interrupted by his untimely death in 1914.

The President of the Academy, the classical philologist Kazimierz Morawski, postulated publishing the entire correspondence of Dantiscus as an “unparalleled monument to Polish culture, of European significance.”<sup>9</sup> Further work was entrusted to Stanisław Skimina, who took up the critical edition of the Neo-Latin poems written by Dantiscus.<sup>10</sup> The plan for the edition of the correspondence was submitted to the PAU Commission on History, but the enormity of the manuscript material, so varied in terms of palaeography, and its dispersal in the archives and libraries all over Europe, hindered the ambitious plans of Professor Morawski. After World War II, Władysław Pocięcha included the correspondence of Dantiscus in the printed *Acta Tomiciana* collection which he elaborated in a much greater

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<sup>6</sup> See Julian Platt, *Naruszewicz*, in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, ed. Emanuel Rostworowski, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wrocław 1977, vol. 22, p. 554; Relevant *Naruszewicz Files* are preserved at the Czartoryski Library at Cracow under the pressmarks 32, 34–44, 46–66.

<sup>7</sup> See Scientific Library of PAU & PAN in Cracow, MSS 8239-8251 (TK 1–13).

<sup>8</sup> See Centrale Bibliotheek Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, MS R.III, 30–33.

<sup>9</sup> See n. 1; see also *Acta Tomiciana*, ed. Władysław Pocięcha, vol. 14, Bibliotheca Kornicensis, Poznań 1952, with the editor’s preface, p. XV.

<sup>10</sup> See *Ioannis Dantisci poetae laureati Carmina*, ed. Stanisław Skimina, in the series “Corpus Antiquissimorum Poetarum Poloniae Latinorum” 7, PAU, Kraków 1950; Stanisław Skimina, *Twórczość poetycka Jana Dantyszka*, in the series “Rozprawy Wydziału Filologicznego – Polska Akademia Umiejętności,” vol. 68/1, PAU, Kraków 1948.



scope than the previous editors had.<sup>11</sup> However, the research project devoted to Dantiscus exclusively and encompassing his entire legacy was continued not until the next generation of scholars took the reins, when it was again transferred to the field of philological/literary studies.



Laboratory for Editing Sources, Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Nowy Świat St. 69  
From the left: Anna Skolimowska, Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun, Isabella Żołędziowska

The most outstanding follower of Morawski, Kazimierz Kumaniecki, cherished the idea of publishing Neo-Latin sources and instilled this in the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of Warsaw, passing, shortly

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<sup>11</sup> See *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. 14, ed. Władysław Pocięcha, Bibliotheca Kornicensis, Poznań 1952; *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. 15, ed. Władysław Pocięcha, Bibliotheca Kornicensis, Wrocław–Kraków 1957; *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. 16/1, ed. Władysław Pocięcha, Institutum Nationale Ossolinianum, Wrocław 1960; *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. 16/2, ed. Władysław Pocięcha, Institutum Nationale Ossolinianum, Wrocław–Kraków–Poznań 1961; *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. 17, eds. Władysław Pocięcha, Waclaw Urban, Andrzej Wyczański, Institutum Nationale Ossolinianum, Wrocław 1966.

before he died in 1977, all the materials he owned on Dantiscus to his pupil – Jerzy Axer.

In 1982, the Laboratory for Editing Greek and Latin Sources was established in the UW Institute of Classical Studies,<sup>12</sup> where the research programme entitled *Correspondence of Ioannes Dantiscus* was launched. The first major achievement of the programme was that of publishing, in 1994, in Madrid, a book entitled *Españoles y polacos en la Corte de Carlos V. Cartas del embajador Juan Dantisco*, by a team under the direction of Antonio Fontán and Jerzy Axer.<sup>13</sup> In 1991, Jerzy Axer established the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe at the University of Warsaw (OBTA UW). It was then that the special Laboratory for the Registration and Publication of Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence came into being, initially remaining under the joint auspices of the Institute of Classical Studies and OBTA. However, in 2000, OBTA took the burden of working on the Dantiscus Programme. Currently, after institutional transformations, the Laboratory functions as a unit in the Faculty of "Artes Liberales", created in 2012, under the name of the Laboratory for Editing Sources. From its very establishment, the Laboratory has been directed by myself.

Almost from the beginning of its existence, the Dantiscus Programme has been monitored by an international team of advisers under the management of Professor Jerzy Axer. The International Scientific Board of the Programme is composed of:

- Jerzy Axer (Faculty of "Artes Liberales," University of Warsaw),
- Andrzej Borowski (Faculty of Polish Studies, Jagiellonian University),
- Jeannine De Landtsheer (project *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven),
- Marijke De Wit (Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal-en

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<sup>12</sup> See n. 1.

<sup>13</sup> See *Españoles y polacos en la Corte de Carlos V. Cartas del embajador Juan Dantisco*, eds. Antonio Fontán, Jerzy Axer, Isabel Velázquez, Jerzy Mańkowski, Alianza Editorial, Madrid 1994.

- Letterkunde, Ghent),
- Klaus Garber (Interdisziplinäres Institut für Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit, Universität Osnabrück),
  - Stefan Hartmann (Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin),
  - Manfred Hollegger (project *Maximilian Regesten*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Graz),
  - Marek A. Janicki (Institute of History, University of Warsaw),
  - Arne Jönsson (project *Works and Correspondence of Axel Oxenstierna*, Lund Universitet),
  - Walther Ludwig (professor emeritus, Universität Hamburg),
  - Janusz Małek (professor emeritus, Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń),
  - Rex Rexheuser (professor emeritus, Lüneburg, former director of the Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau),
  - Anna Skolimowska (Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” University of Warsaw),
  - Janusz Tandecki (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Institute of History and Archival Sciences).

Among its members were also:

- Marian Biskup (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń) – deceased in 2012,
- Antonio Fontán Pérez (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) – deceased in 2010,
- Joseph Ijsewijn (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) – deceased in 1998,
- Tomasz Ososiński (OBTA, University of Warsaw) – until 2007,
- Paul Gerhard Schmidt (Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg) – deceased in 2010,
- Jerzy Skowronek (Head Offices of State Archives, Warsaw) – deceased in 1996,
- Witold Szczuczko (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, State Archives in Toruń) – deceased in 2012,

- Andrzej Wyczański (Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw) – deceased in 2008.

The Council convenes working sessions once every few years, and these sessions are often connected with an open symposium. Such meetings were held, for instance, in 1995 in Brussels (the *Ioannes Dantiscus (1485–1548) – Polish Ambassador and Humanist* conference), in 1998 in Warsaw (*Royal Prussia and Ducal Prussia in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Panorama of Loyalty*), in 2005 in Warsaw (*Respublica Litteraria. Latin in Polish and European Culture*), in 2010 in Cracow (*Respublica Litteraria in Action 2*).



Opening of the session *Respublica Litteraria. Latin in Polish and European Culture*, Concert Hall, Royal Castle in Warsaw, March 5, 2005. From the right: Prof. Jerzy Wyrozumski, Andrzej Derelkowski, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Dr. Anna Skolimowska

At present, the following researchers take part in the works within the Dantiscus Programme: Anna Skolimowska – Head of the Laboratory, Marijke De Wit, Katarzyna Gołabek, Marek A. Janicki, Katarzyna Jasińska-

Zdun, Konrad Kokoszkiewicz, Valentina Lepri, Magdalena Turska, and Isabella Żołędziowska. Joanna Dutkiewicz and Elżbieta Olechowska are responsible for the translation and editing of English texts, while Witold Grzechnik – for the technical part of the undertaking.



An early (between 1517–1529) exlibris of Dantiscus, pasted on the pre-title page of the print [Eike von Repkow], *Remissorium mit sambt dem Weichpilde und Lehnrecht* [= *Sachsenspiegel*], Hans Otmar, Augsburg 1508

From the very beginning of the implementation of the Programme at the University of Warsaw, the works on the registration and edition of the correspondence by Dantiscus were also carried out by Teresa Borawska, Małgorzata Borowska, Antonio Fontán Pérez, Ambrozja Jadwiga Kalinowska, Katarzyna Kotońska, Enrique Llamas Martínez, Jerzy Mańkowski, Mieczysław Mejor, Tomasz Ososiński, Paulina Pludra-Żuk, Tomasz Płóciennik, Teodomiro Rodriguez Lillo, Robert Sochań, Mikołaj Szymański, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, Ryszard Tomicki, Isabel Velázquez, and Joanna Ziabicka. The texts were translated into Spanish by Abel A. Murcia Soriano and Katarzyna Górna-Urbańska, while the works in English were edited by Kate Delaney and Maria Bożenna Fedewicz.

Until 2012, the Programme was financed by the University of Warsaw, within the scope of statutory research. Between 1997 and 2007, works on Dantiscus' correspondence written in German were co-funded by the Foundation for Polish-German Cooperation. In 1998 and 2006, the Programme obtained resources from the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP) and, in 2007, a three-year grant from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MNiSW). At present, the Programme is fully financed from the grant entitled *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence* for the years 2012–2016 within the scope of the National Programme for the Development of Humanities (NPRH).

### **Works Carried Out and in Progress**

Copies of manuscripts and publications of the correspondence by Dantiscus have been gathered in the Laboratory for Editing Sources. As a result of archive and library queries lasting more than twenty years, we have managed to register manuscripts distributed among 658 archive units, kept in 38 archives and at Polish and foreign libraries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, France, Spain, Germany, Russia, Switzerland, Sweden, the Vatican, Hungary, Great Britain, Italy).

Currently, the Dantiscus Programme encompasses two parallel tasks: printed publication and Internet publication. The sources, critical apparatus, substantive comments, and summaries of letters, both printed and

published on the Internet, are all in English, which makes the edition accessible to the widest possible academic circles.

Printed publication “Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci”

The printed publication is implemented within the scope of the series entitled “Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci,” published since 2004 (academic editing by Jerzy Axer and Anna Skolimowska). The series, divided into four parts, was planned to take up at least fifteen volumes of source texts and inventories (part five, presenting discussions on the sources published, not included), of which six have already been published.

Part I – *Ioannis Dantisci Epistulae Latinae* [*Ioannes Dantiscus’ Latin Letters*]

Vol. 1 *Epistulae Latinae Ioannis Dantisci a. 1537* [*Ioannes Dantiscus’ Latin Letters, 1537*], ed. Anna Skolimowska, OBTA–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow 2004;

Vol. 2 *Epistulae Latinae Ioannis Dantisci a. 1538–1539* [*Ioannes Dantiscus’ Latin Letters, 1538–1539*], in preparation;

Vol. 3 *Epistulae Latinae Ioannis Dantisci a. 1540–1543* [*Ioannes Dantiscus’ Latin Letters, 1540–1543*], in preparation;

Vol. 4 *Epistulae Latinae Ioannis Dantisci a. 1544–1548* [*Ioannes Dantiscus’ Latin Letters, 1544–1548*], in preparation;

Vol. 5 *Epistulae Latinae Ioannis Dantisci a. 1515–1536 adhuc ineditae* [*Ioannes Dantiscus’ Inedited Latin Letters, 1515–1536*], in preparation.

This part of the series encompasses those letters written by Dantiscus which have not been printed so far, that is, almost all letters elaborated after 1536 (many of the previous letters were published in the *Acta Tomiciana* collection, the publishers of which do not plan on incorporating Dantiscus’ correspondence into subsequent volumes).

Part II – *Amicorum sermones mutui* [*Friends’ Mutual Conversations*]

Vol. 1 *Epistulae Sigismundi de Herberstein et Ioannis Dantisci* [*Ioannes*

*Dantiscus' Correspondence with Sigmund von Herberstein*], eds. Marek A. Janicki, Tomasz Ososiński, OBTA–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow 2008;  
Vol. 2 *Epistulae Cornelii Scepperi et Ioannis Dantisci* [*Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence with Cornelis De Schepper*], ed. Marijke De Wit, to be published in 2014;  
Vol. 3 *Epistulae Alphonsi Valdesii et Ioannis Dantisci* [*Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence with Alfonso Valdés*], ed. Anna Skolimowska, AL–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow 2013.

This part of the series encompasses correspondence between Dantiscus and his friends, contacts with whom (documented with the correspondence) are highly crucial for studies on European humanism. If justified, once we have published parts three and four of the series, the publication of volume four is also planned, and it will encompass Dantiscus' correspondence with several selected humanists.

Part III – *Illustrium virorum epistulae* [*Correspondence of Illustrious Men*]

Vol. 1 *The Letters to Ioannes Dantiscus Preserved in Uppsala University Library codex ms. H. 154*, planned;  
Vol. 2 *The Letters to Ioannes Dantiscus Preserved in Uppsala University Library codex ms. H. 155*, planned.

This part encompasses two volumes of autographs of unique significance as historical sources up to the times of the Reformation. Many of the letters have not been published before, although the effort to copy them for this purpose has been taken up since the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The letters shall be published in the English translation and in the form of facsimiles.

Part IV – *Inventarium* [*Inventory*]

Vol. 1 *Inventory of Ioannes Dantiscus' German-Language Correspondence, a. 1500–1548*, ed. Tomasz Ososiński, OBTA–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow 2007;  
Vol. 2 *Inventory of Ioannes Dantiscus' Latin Letters, a. 1515–1548*, eds. Anna Skolimowska, Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun, IBI AL–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow 2011;



Vols. 3–4 *Inventory of Latin Letters to Ioannes Dantiscus with Addition of Letters in Spanish, Polish, Italian, Dutch, Czech, and French*, in preparation;

Vol. 5 *Chronological Index of Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence*, planned.

This part presents all the known manuscript sources of Dantiscus' correspondence plus those kept in the form of prints (ca. 13,000 source documents). The inventory includes data concerning the place of storage of the source, the sender and addressee of the letter, the place and date of sending and receiving the letter, the first line, and information on any and all previous prints.

#### Part V – *Respublica Litteraria in Action*

Vol. 1 *Respublica Litteraria in Action. Letters – Speeches – Poems – Inscriptions*, ed. Anna Skolimowska, OBTA–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow 2007;

Vol. 2 *Respublica Litteraria in Action: Religion and Politics*, ed. Anna Skolimowska with collaboration of Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun, IBI AL–PAU, Warsaw–Cracow 2012.

This part includes materials presented and discussed during sessions of the International Scientific Board of the Programme, which accompanied the presentation of subsequent volumes of the “Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci” series. The discussions concern various aspects of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century *Respublica Litteraria*, documenting the phenomenon of the source materials, their territorial reach, and role in the development of European culture. This part will encompass new volumes (i.a., vol. 5/3), prepared after subsequent meetings of the Board.

Internet publication *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus'*  
*Texts & Correspondence*: <http://dantiscus.al.uw.edu.pl>

Works on the Internet publication were commenced in 2007, owing to the three-year grant entitled *Internet Publication of the Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence, Poems and Speeches (1485–1548)*, obtained

in the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MNiSW). In 2012, the first results were published. These were: the inventory *Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence* and the *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Latin Texts*.

The *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Texts & Correspondence* is being elaborated by a team under my supervision. The IT-related aspects of the publication lie within the responsibility of Engineer Magdalena Turska. We use a cutting-edge digital system for Renaissance correspondence registration and annotation, based on the TEI coded text standard and the SQL relational database with an interface in Polish and in English. All data and text files are published on the server of the Laboratory for Editing Sources of the Faculty of "Artes Liberales" at the University of Warsaw and on the website of the Laboratory. In its final shape, the *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Texts & Correspondence* will be composed of three parts:

1. *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence*

This part is currently in the form of a database, entitled: *Ioannes Dantiscus' Correspondence*. It contains the inventory of comprehensive correspondence, encompassing the following data: the sender, the addressee, the first line, the date, data on the sources, data on printed publications, and facsimile of primary sources. All Latin letters by Dantiscus (776 letters) are also presented in a searchable full-text version. The wording of the remaining letters is added regularly. In the future, once all the letters have been elaborated as full texts, this part shall be transformed into a *Corpus*.

2. *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Latin Texts*

The *Corpus of Latin Texts* presents 776 letters, 104 poems, 7 speeches, 15 memorials, and 36 documents written by Dantiscus in Latin. The publication is made in the form of searchable text files ordered through a relational database.

### 3. *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' German Texts*

The *Corpus of German Texts* is now under construction. The form of the corpus shall be analogous to the already existing *Corpus of Latin Texts* and shall present 917 letters written by Dantiscus in German and 41 documents which he issued, also in German.



The Internet publication also presents biographical and bibliographical information concerning Ioannes Dantiscus. Under the Dantiscus Programme, apart from the editorial work already mentioned above, accompanying publications were also elaborated – their list is accessible online at: [www.fontes.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.fontes.al.uw.edu.pl).

### **Teaching**

Based on the achievements on the Dantiscus Programme, didactic classes are held at the University on Latin palaeography (for students of Classical Philology, Inter-Area Individual Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, East-European School in the Humanities, and unenrolled students). Additionally, classes on the reading and interpretation of Neo-Latin sources were organized (for students of Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization). Moreover, mentoring is provided to the trainees and guests of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.”

### **Summary**

The date for completion of work on the full-text edition of the entire legacy of Dantiscus is still difficult to determine. The Internet publication, *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus' Texts & Correspondence*, which provides access to the inventory and – to certain scope – to searchable sources, still operates as a prototype, performing the function of a workshop for the printed series entitled “Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci.” We will be able to speak of the completion of works on the Internet publication once all the 6,500 texts

registered are published in extenso and provided with a commentary, and indices of persons and places. This is undoubtedly a long-term perspective.

The plans of the Dantiscus Programme for the next three years encompass printing volumes 2/2, 4/3, and 5/3 of the “Corpus Epistularum Ioannis Dantisci” series as well as preliminary publication (with no full commentary yet) of the Internet *Corpus of Ioannes Dantiscus’ German Texts*. By the end of 2014, another meeting of the International Scientific Board of the Programme is planned to be held in Warsaw, combined with the session *Respublica Litteraria in Action 3*.

If we are to search for a concise answer to the question about the targets of this extensive and arduous task, it would be: ad fontes – back to the sources. The research interests of the publishers are currently focused around issues connected with Dantiscus’ religious and political identity (Anna Skolimowska), his itinerary (Katarzyna Jasińska-Zdun), and evidence of material culture in his German correspondence (Isabella Żołędziowska). These are only a few of the many subjects in the field of history, linguistics, history of culture, and history of human thought, for which Dantiscus’ correspondence and his texts are a unique source, due to both their volume and the values of the person around which they arose.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> See also the radio programme in the cycle “Anegdoty i fakty” by Eliza Bojarska: *Jan Dantyszek – pierwszy polski ambasador*, with the participation of Professors Jerzy Axer and Jan Kieniewicz in Polish Radio, April 16, 1995, online: <http://www.polskieradio.pl/39/156/Artykul/964367,Jan-Dantyszek-%E2%80%93-pierwszy-polski-ambasador> (consulted: Nov. 3, 2013).



*Justyna Olko*

## **ABOUT CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM**

**W**HEN I BEGAN WORK at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA) in 2001, I had no clear idea of how my “exotic” interest in native Mesoamerica could become an integral part of the teaching and research carried out here. Today, together with a group of several dozen researchers and students, we work on a broad spectrum of issues connected with the native cultures of America, demonstrating genuine commitment in efforts which aim at the revitalization of endangered languages. Classes related to our research work have become an integral part of the wider studies curriculum. A major part of our activities, rooted for years in the interests and programmes pursued at OBTA, is much more universal than interest in American Studies alone. This evolution is illustrated by subsequent stages of organizing our team, from the Laboratory Encounters between Old Cultures (2001), through the Laboratory Encounters between the Old and New Worlds (2009), to the Section under the same name.

### **Encounters between Old Cultures**

The heart of this years-long evolution was no doubt the possibility to freely connect expert research, oriented towards issues from the field of American Studies, with the creation of an interdisciplinary space for the exchange of viewpoints, experiences, and perspectives. Complete freedom of discussions, attended by representatives of academic milieu who rarely stay in

touch, as well as freedom within the scope of the subjects raised and the selection of issues and questions asked, have become the indicators of the *Encounters between Old Cultures* organized by the Laboratory from 2002 to 2009. During the next ten sessions, each devoted to a specific issue, we managed to create a space for encounters between an exceptional group of researchers willing to share with other participants, often from outside their traditional milieu, their perspectives, observations, and ideas concerning various aspects of the functioning of old cultures and of the transformations of memory of these cultures. Moreover, the sessions created a space for exciting discussions not limited within the rigid frameworks of academic conferences or by disciplinary or thematic divides. Our considerations concerned phenomena and problems which are significant not only to historians or experts in Cultural Studies, but to all sensitive observers of the present. We moved freely and without disciplinary prejudice from old subjects to contemporary issues, often looking at various phenomena in a manner impossible for those who respect the existent divisions and barriers. This approach proved invaluable for the organization of international conferences, where the need to integrate divided milieu and overcome academic and beyond-academic barriers turned out to be as strong as, or even stronger than in Polish academic circles.

It is hardly news to state that interdisciplinary collaboration in the Humanities usually remains on the level of declarations or only superficial studies, the authors of which do not even attempt to combine the research methods and research opportunities related to various disciplines with the cooperation which integrates disparate groups of scholars and academic traditions. In consequence, the declared “interdisciplinary” undertakings in the Humanities often do not make use of the huge potential resulting from the merger of differing workshops, source types, and scholarly perspectives. At the core of the *Encounters between Old Cultures* was not the creation of a research programme or fully interdisciplinary studies, but rather the unveiling of the potential of interdisciplinary cooperation. The studies were to stimulate the exchange of thoughts among various research groups, the quest for new research fields, and a broader view of problems. In this sense they have become an inspiration which allows me to discern

fascinating research perspectives based on the interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and inter-milieux cooperation that we are currently implementing at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.”

The first session of the *Encounters between Old Cultures* series, the *Semiotics of Behaviours of Old Elites* (2002),<sup>1</sup> made us aware not only of the pleasure in discovering familiar issues in other cultural contexts, but also of the perspectives which emerge from a broader view of numerous problems from the past, which, often unattainable or oblique in the source materials available, manifest themselves in various forms within distant territories and time spans. This helped us pose questions and advance theses which would be difficult to formulate looking at one culture, society, epoch, or source category only. This potential emerged even more so during the next encounter, the *Reception of Old Cultures in the Ideology of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century* (2003).<sup>2</sup> This became an occasion to hold multi-layered, exciting talks on the reception and use of references to old cultures in the past and contemporary world: in ideology, politics, building identity and national myths, and in education and science. Together we pondered the reach of the inherited and contemporary stereotypes and of the imminent political, cultural, and national entanglements of the researchers themselves. We asked ourselves to what extent we ourselves yielded to outdated or spreading paradigms, the ideological component of which we were not always able to realize. Subsequent sessions, that is, the one devoted to the imagery of the enemy (2003)<sup>3</sup> and the one focused around deliberations on various aspects of rituals, performances, and theatre both in old cultures and in contemporary traditions referring thereto (2004)<sup>4</sup> abounded in questions, interesting theses, and surprising comparisons as

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<sup>1</sup> This publication, containing papers that originated from addresses and discussions, gave rise to the book series “Spotkania dawnych kultur”: *Dawne elity. Słowo i gest*, eds. Jerzy Axer, Justyna Olko, OBTA UW–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2005.

<sup>2</sup> See *Dawne kultury w ideologiach XIX i XX wieku*, ed. Justyna Olko, OBTA UW–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>3</sup> See *Wyobrażenie wroga w dawnych kulturach*, eds. Justyna Olko, Patrycja Prządka-Giersz, OBTA UW–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2007.

<sup>4</sup> See *Obrzęd, teatr, ceremoniał w dawnych kulturach*, ed. Justyna Olko, IBI AL UW–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2008.



well. The spectacular aspect of the rituals and ceremonial behaviours, the role of rites in literature and theatre, as well as the relations between actors and the audience turned out to be a fascinating plane of dialogue between various cultures, traditions, and staging forms. Yet another encounter, the *Narrative, History, Fiction. Old Cultures in Historiography and Literature* (2004),<sup>5</sup> brought about an animated exchange of thoughts concerning relations between literary and historical sources, methodological challenges, as well as the limitations and opportunities the historian faces.



Offerings on the floor of the church in Huauhquechula, Puebla  
(former Quauhquechollan)

Next, we moved to a topic which rarely becomes the subject of discussion and which is still struggling to find its place in scholarship, namely,

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<sup>5</sup> See *Narracja, historia, fikcja. Dawne kultury w historiografii i literaturze*, ed. Łukasz Grützmacher, Wydawnictwo Trio-IBI AL UW, Warszawa 2009.

to forgery and falsification both in old cultures and in research devoted thereto, and in the present-day world (2005).

The panel discussion held during the presentation of the book devoted to that subject, published in 2012,<sup>6</sup> evoked exceptional emotions. Although the issue of falsification of contemporary history was not raised during the session itself, it was this very issue that became the subject of an animated disputation, reaching far beyond the frameworks, conventions, and emotions of an academic debate. At one table sat representatives of opposing experiences, perspectives, and points of view, the heroes of contemporary history, the witnesses of past events, and the observers of present times. The encounter showed that these issues are not a closed chapter in studies of the past: forgery still remains an inseparable element of the struggles of historians, meeting with huge interest beyond academic circles, and scholarly disputes are burdened with tremendous social responsibility. During subsequent sessions, we also talked about the ethos of warriors, honour and duels (2006), death and resurrection in old cultures (2007), as well as about the role of the media and propaganda in former days and now (2008). The most recent session organized under the series, the *Encounters between Worlds, Clashes of Cultures* (2009), announced a new stage of the Laboratory's interest: cross-cultural contact and communication, especially between the Old and New Worlds.

### **The Old and New Worlds**

A distinctive feature of this research orientation was the transformation, in 2008, of the Laboratory Encounters between Old Cultures into the Laboratory Encounters between the Old and New Worlds, inaugurated on April 15, 2008. Splendour to the ceremony was added by the lecture of Professor Mark Meadow, *The Aztecs at Ambras: Fugger Agency in the Transmission of Knowledge of the New World*. To the forefront came the creation of a team cooperating with researchers and scholarly milieu focused on the issues of European/indigenous cross-cultural communication in Poland,

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<sup>6</sup> See *Falszterstwa i manipulacje w przeszłości i wobec przeszłości*, ed. Justyna Olko, Wydawnictwo Trio-IBI AL UW, Warszawa 2012.

the US, Spain, Mexico, and Peru, as well as the establishment of cooperation within the scope of similar research in other fields. We became particularly interested in studies of the historical tradition and the identity of indigenous elites before and after the conquest, of the native concepts of the “barbarian,” the “savage,” and the “stranger” at the meeting of native-American and European cultures, in the subjects of the conquest, colonization, communication, acculturation, in the problem of Eurocentrism and research paradigms in reconstructions of the pre-Hispanic cultures of the Americas, and in research on the manuscripts of New Spain and on critical editions and studies concerning indigenous sources.



An 18<sup>th</sup>-century Nahua document, fragment, Archivo Histórico de Tlaxcala

The subsidy which I received in 2010 from the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP) within the Focus programme spurred us to develop team research. Not only did the subsidy allow us to create a research team composed of several people, but it also made it possible for us to renovate and furnish the research and teaching space for the purpose of the Laboratory which, owing to the said changes, was transformed into the Section.

The inauguration of the first research team coincided with the first international conference which we organized together with Doctor Stephanie Wood, Head of the Wired Humanities Projects (University of Oregon, Eugene), entitled: *Negotiating Encounters: Cross-Cultural Communication, Translation, and Interplay in Pre-Hispanic and Colonial Mesoamerica* (June 20–24, 2010). We raised the issue of confrontation and communication between the Old and New Worlds, which is significant for both European science and the scholarly circles of North and Latin America. The aim of the encounter was not only to collect the most eminent researchers interested in the issues indicated above, who represented important academic centres worldwide, but also to create a neutral space for discussion with the participation of representatives of differing scholar milieux, not infrequently divided in a traditional way. The conference was attended by a dozen or so researchers from the US, Spain, Germany, Mexico, Israel, Russia, and Poland and the agenda included lectures by experts and workshops. From that moment on, we have continued to organize annual international conferences of a similar formula and subject matter, devoted to the European-indigenous “clashes of cultures” and cross-cultural communication. Beside the question of an innovative selection of issues and subjects represented during the encounters, yet another idea lying behind their organization is to build exchange and cooperation that go across the existing divides in the academic world and within the subjects of research and disciplinary fields.

### **Academic Freedom in Teaching**

Had free implementation of the ideas for giving classes, unrestricted by rigid frameworks of any curricula, not been possible at OBTA from the very beginning of my career there, the matters mentioned above would never have come into being. Although the form and repertoire of the classes change over time, they always remain closely connected with the subject matter of the research projects implemented by the members and collaborators of the growing team. The formula of studies at OBTA made it possible to add to the existent curricula courses which seemed to be quite

exotic and to integrate them into a logical whole, with ossification neither of form nor subject matter. In this way, pre-Hispanic cultures made their way to the curriculum, together with the issues of the conquest, the clash of cultures, cross-cultural dialogue, colonization, the continuation of native traditions, and the creation of Ibero-American culture. A salient element of the studies became that of methodological preparation for critical reading and analyses of such sources as pictographic manuscripts or writings from the era of colonialism. Owing to its open formula, the classes were attended both by students of Mediterranean Studies and the College of Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities (MISH) and by a number of other students from the entire University, including representatives of technical fields of study.

Although the problems raised during the lectures and seminars changed due to developing interests and research challenges, there is one element that has remained unaltered since 2001: Nahuatl classes. From the very beginning, classes have been given on elementary and advanced levels, with the latter being in fact translation classes, during which sources written in Nahuatl have been worked on. These very classes, enjoying huge popularity among students of various faculties, enabled the creation of a strong team which today implements big international research projects.

The culture of Nahua Indians, known as the Aztecs, belongs to the most important civilizations of the pre-Columbian New World and is one of the few pre-Hispanic cultures which remain alive up to the present day. The Nahuatl played a significant role as early as in the Teotihuacan Empire, blossoming over the first 500 years A.D. and extending its influence over the majority of Mesoamerica, including the Maya territories. The language was also spoken by the Toltecs who, at the close of the first millennium, created a strong regional country. In the last centuries before the arrival of the Europeans, Nahuatl became the official language of the Triple Alliance, i.e., the Aztec Empire. As early as in the times referred to – or even earlier – Nahuatl performed the function of a lingua franca, which was even used by the Spaniards after they conquered Mexico. The language was also used by Spanish Crown officials for administrative purposes. Nahuatl could be used at court and was spoken by monks in the process of Christianization and in

contacts with various ethnic groups. The Nahuas mastered the alphabetic writing system as soon as the 1530s and initiated rich writing traditions in their own language which, in some regions, survived until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When it comes to the volume and diversity of genres, the texts in Nahuatl are unrivalled by any other native language of the Americas.



The first book for children published monolingually in Nahuatl within the editorial series “Totlahtol” [“Our Speech”] (2013)

Although the writing tradition vanished in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Nahuatl still remains one of the most crucial native languages of the Americas: it is still spoken by more than 1,000,000 people, but the number is dropping dramatically. This is largely because in contemporary Mexico, the continuity between the old cultures and the present-day indigenous communities tends to be negated. The Nahuas, similarly to other native groups, are subject to widespread discrimination, especially in terms of education.

In my first years as a Nahuatl teacher, I was not aware that our language course and translation classes became the only permanent classes of this type across the world (outside of Mexico), despite the huge significance of the language for studies into the history of pre-Hispanic, colonial, and contemporary America, as well as for the studies on intercultural contact. Indeed, there are very few cases of “the clash of cultures” that could be documented quite so well as the encounter of the Spaniards and the Aztecs. Nahua culture is the subject of interest of a large body of researchers in the US, Europe, and Mexico, which, unfortunately, is not reflected in the language teaching curricula. Currently, there is no permanent course held in the US, except for classes organized on a short-term basis, within one semester at most, and except for the summer course at Yale, carried out under the Yale banner by our partner institution, Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas (IDIEZ). I was surprised to learn the reasons for such a state of affairs. The classes are not included in the canon of official curricula of any prestigious universities, even if the scholars of such universities work in the area of native cultures and colonial history. And lecturers are not interested in giving unofficial classes, from outside of the obligatory teaching hours. In Mexico, the situation is quite different: the classes held there attract a narrow circle of participants (when compared to our reality, where last year, the elementary course was attended by thirty-five students), since Nahuatl still lacks prestige and significance. Modern Nahua people are not considered to be the direct successors of the great Aztecs, whose masterpieces are the subject of admiration in museums. Meanwhile, at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” we not only implement a project which combines the former and contemporary Nahua culture: a member of this culture teaches contemporary Nahuatl, which has become part of the curriculum next to its colonial version, known as the “classical” version.

The question of teaching one of the most significant languages of the New World, and which has become a permanent element of the curriculum – first, of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA), then, of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (IBI AL) and, finally, of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” – allowed me to grasp

*About Cross-Cultural Encounters and Academic Freedom*

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the meaning of academic freedom in teaching. It is not only the flexibility of curriculum frameworks which makes it possible to integrate therein subjects of study and to experiment with combining research and teaching. It is also the conviction of the lecturers that they have both the right and the possibility to freely shape the formula of the classes and to implement their very own visions of teaching.



Dr. Justyna Olko with Nahua children in San Isidro de Buensuceso, Tlaxcala, November 2012



The fact that my colleagues at American universities lack this conviction made me realize what an exceptional character imbues the academic space in which I work. Last year, the status of Nahuatl at Mediterranean Studies was made equal to classical European languages, as a result of which students are now able to choose between classical Greek and classical Nahuatl as their additional classical language. This evokes amazement and astonishment among academic circles in the US, Mexico, and even in European Union member states. To our joy, it also meets with huge interest and elicits pride among students who are – or used to be as children – native speakers of the language.

### **Overcoming Barriers**

For me, the freedom to teach and shape the manner of teaching is directly connected with the freedom of research. Without the years of teaching, first at OBTA and then in IBI AL, we would never be able to implement our research projects. Furthermore, without the teaching and experimenting with the manners of transmission and generation of knowledge – together with our students and members of research teams – the research would be skimpy and incomplete. We would be unable to understand its potential and use it to the full. The evolution of the Laboratory Encounters between Old Cultures and the Laboratory Encounters Between the Old and New Worlds brought us to the extensive research project implemented since 2010, owing to the support of the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP, under the aforementioned Focus and Ideas for Poland programmes), and since 2012, owing to the European Research Council (ERC Starting Grant in the IDEAS programme). The research carried out under my supervision also includes our two partner institutions abroad: Instituto de Docencia e Investigación Etnológica de Zacatecas (IDIEZ) in Mexico and Universidad de Sevilla in Spain. We explore in depth the mechanism of cultural communication between Europe and America covering an extensive time span, from the conquest of Mexico until the present day, i.e., almost five centuries. We examine the changes that have taken place as a result of such contact in Nahua culture and language. Making use of the research

methods and experience of several liberal arts disciplines (ethnohistory, anthropology of culture, linguistics, history of art), we make attempts to grasp the relations between linguistic change and transformation and continuity in a broadly defined culture.



Logo of the project *Endangered Languages. Comprehensive Models for Research and Revitalization*

The subject matter and the scope of research are not the only objects of our experiment, as it is also focused on overcoming academic, environmental, and ideological barriers. By building an international and interdisciplinary team, we offer new, partnership forms of cooperation between Western researchers and students who are indigenous by descent, and often discriminated against in the academic world. In traditional anthropological practice, natives are perceived above all as informants, passive providers of data that are understandable and interpretable to anthropologists only. In our projects, Nahua students and other indigenous cooperators are treated as equals: they fully participate in academic works and co-elaborate the results thereof. The lexical resources collected and subjected to analysis, as well as the knowledge of language preservation strategies in intensified contact, might be of use in efforts on behalf of preserving endangered cultures. Therefore, we wish to use the results of the research for our

next team project, *Endangered Languages. Comprehensive Models for Research and Revitalization*, implemented under the National Program for the Development of Humanities (NPRH) of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland.

The aim of the project is to develop effective strategies for the revitalization of vanishing languages using the examples of Nahuatl, Lemko, and Wymysorys.<sup>7</sup> The aforementioned languages differ from one to another in terms of cultural context, historical experiences, the number of users, existent source documentation, and the social problems affecting the communities in which they managed to survive. Yet there are many similarities as well, especially when it comes to various forms of discrimination of the users of these languages and the risk of disrupting language continuity or dramatic limitation of the scope of their use. Our project stipulates close cooperation between researchers and representatives of local communities in Poland and abroad, which makes it possible to overcome disciplinary, thematic, and environmental barriers. As members of multi-cultural team, we elaborate numerous course materials, including student books for Wymysorys and Nahuatl courses, dictionaries, Internet resources, and fairytales. When it comes to Nahuatl, we have also made an attempt to standardize the orthography on the basis of the tradition of colonial texts and current linguistic knowledge. We hope that the effects of our research work on endangered languages will translate directly into educational and consolidation-related efforts. Our projects are rooted in the traditions of OBTA, in the long-time cross-cultural experience of the milieu, and in the efforts, which integrate research, teaching, and forms of activity that reach beyond the confines of Academia.

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<sup>7</sup> See the project's website: <http://www.revitalization.al.uw.edu.pl/> (consulted: Nov. 14, 2013).

**HADES IN LES HALLES.  
ANTIQUITY WITHIN THE EXPANSE OF PARIS\***

**1**

**I**N PARIS – THE CAPITAL OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY and, more specifically, in *The Passages* – which are among the fragments making up the *Disassembly: The Sources of Theoretical Structure Teaching* group – Walter Benjamin included the following aphorism concerning the existence of the images of memory: “Das Jetzt das innerste Bild des Gewesnen,” which can be translated as: “*Now* is the innermost image of *Then*.”

A similar insight was presented by Aby Warburg: “Nachleben der Antike” – “The immortals of Antiquity,” as embodied in the city. The immortals can be found in works of art and within the expanse of the city, in the behaviour of its residents, in seemingly insignificant details, in the rustle, clusters, draughts, waste, sewage, alleys stinking of urine, and in the Parisian *Halles*.

**2**

Walter Benjamin perceived the streets of Paris not as an expanse limited by the façades of houses connecting points of the city with others. For him, Parisian streets were “the magic challenges of thresholds,” “the intestines” or “the prostitute’s womb.” The architecture of Paris makes us think of

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\* Fragments of this text have been published at [http://www.rfi.fr/actupl/articles/106/article\\_5813.asp](http://www.rfi.fr/actupl/articles/106/article_5813.asp) as part of the essay entitled *Zagubione światło* [*The Lost Light*] (consulted: Nov. 14, 2013).

“the testimonies of mythology,” which slowly – yet stubbornly – reveal the memory of the long term (*longue durée*) of European culture.

*Les Halles* – the centuries-old belly of Paris – opened, ripped, stitched, pressed, producing smells (odours), and voices. *Les Halles* – assembled, dismantled, reassembled. A “dialectic” place – vivid, moving, multi-layered, where each *Now* is satiating, resonating, opening, and revealing of the hidden *Then*: “Das Jetzt das innerste Bild des Gewesenen.” A place where the presence of Antiquity is tangible. Just pay attention.



Boulangerie, 48 rue Descartes, 1911

3

Discussions on “postmodernism,” “posthumanism,” and any other “posts” are liable to oblivate the meanings of words. For example, the French word *modernité* borders *mort* and *mode*. How can it be expressed in English? “Contemporaneity”? “Modernism”? Okay, let’s call it “modernism.” In this word the echo of the monster can be heard, *la mode* as the parody of dying. But also the echo of the “moribund,” more and more quiet... Benjamin composed into *The Passages* a quotation from Baudelaire (see Georges Didi-Huberman, *Ninfa moderna. Essai sur le drape tombé*, Gallimard, Paris 2002, p. 48): “The face of contemporariness (modernity) paralyses with its pre-existent look. Our originality, as people of modernity, comes from the signature imprinted in our sensations by time.” What is contemporary (*moderne*), is inevitably pre-existent.

4

What does *I am* mean in contemporary, modern times? What is contemporaneity (modernity)? Such is the title of a book by Giorgio Agamben (*Che cos’è il contemporaneo?*, Nottetempo, Roma 2008), which includes his lecture inaugurating the seminar on theoretical philosophy, held by Agamben in academic year 2005/2006 at the University in Venice. The lecture was printed once again, in Agamben’s book entitled *Nudités* published in 2010 (*Nudità*, Nottetempo, Roma 2010).

Agamben started his deliberations on contemporaneity and the meaning of being modern by referring to Roland Barthes who, in his lectures devoted to Friedrich Nietzsche at Collège de France, said: “The contemporary is the untimely.”

What Barthes meant was *Untimely Meditations*. Nietzsche, the young and promising classical philologist, who previously had worked only on Greek texts and who two years earlier had achieved fame for his book *The Birth of Tragedy*, in 1874 published *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen – Untimely Meditations*, in which he settled accounts with his epoch and wrote about contemporariness.

In the *Meditations*, Nietzsche talked about the necessity of “not being in the phase” in order to understand contemporariness. The one who is really submerged in *Now*, who is really contemporary (modern) remains a bit “unstuck” from *Now*, and in this sense is “untimely.” Nonetheless, owing to his anachronistic nature, owing to the detachment “from,” he is more capable of grasping his time. This does not mean that such a person lives in another world, dies from nostalgia, or cuts himself off from contemporary events. All it means is that the one who is submerged in modernity, moving along by an invisible whit only, experiences contemporariness strongly and deeply. In contrast, those who fully identify with their epochs, with no reflections at all, who lose themselves in “contemporaneity,” and who shallowly live only in the *Now*, do not notice contemporaneity, because it remains unnoticeable to them. Thus, they do not know much of their past or future. They have nothing to fix their eyes on.

## 5

Contemporary (modern) is the person who measures his time with his eyes, to see darkness instead of light. All times, forever, are dark for those who live in them. Contemporary (modern) is the person who can write, dipping his pen in the dark night of *Now*. But what does it mean to “see darkness” and “perceive gloom”?

Neurophysiologists say that the darkness we see before our eyes when we find ourselves in a dark room or when closing our eyes is the product of the cells on the peripheries of the retina, the off-cells. They are activated by the lack of light and produce a peculiar vision: we see darkness. Thus, darkness is by no means negative, it is not a mere lack of light or something like not-seeing, but, instead, it is the product of the retina, the product of the off-cells.

When it comes to the darkness hidden in contemporaneity (modernity), we can say that its perception is not numb or passive, but requires particular activity, which consists in the neutralization of the brightness of the epoch to discover the darkness strictly united there with.

6

Only the one who does not get blinded by the brightness of the ages and is capable of grasping the zone of shadow, the dark intimacy, is modern. But such explanation is not enough. Why do it? Why expose the darkness in the bright *Now*? Is darkness something different than a nameless experience, a hostile experience, impenetrable by nature, something that does not trouble us much? So, why care?



*Les Halles in Paris, 1907*



Just the opposite – says Agamben – we do care, very much: contemporary (modern) is the person who perceives the darkness of his age as a matter which concerns him to the highest extent possible, lurking incessantly as something that turns its face to him more strongly than all the lights put together. Contemporary is the person hit in the face by the bundle of darkness from *Now*.



*Les Halles in Paris, 1898*

When we raise our heads towards the night sky, to look at shining stars, we forget that they shine in the darkness. They shine the more, the blacker the sky. Stars shine against the background of dark sky. Darkness guarantees shining – say astrophysicists, scholars to be trusted, as real astrophysicists must be poets from the race of Orpheus.

Astrophysicists also say that the darkness of the sky is in fact a brightness which has not managed to reach us. The Universe is moving

constantly, it is constantly being created, and is constantly dying. Distant galaxies move away from us with such great speed that their light has yet to reach us.

What we see as darkness in the sky is, in fact, the light.

## 7

To see light in the darkness of *Now*, which is trying to get through to us but cannot – this is the task of those wishing to comprehend modernity. To see this light in the darkness, i.e., to feel its presence in the gloom, means being brave. Alert. Comprehending one's time. One's time and place in the world which, although dark, is filled with the light making its way to existence. The light beneath the darkness is not merely a dark trinket of evil forces, but the presence of *Then* in *Now*. This is a challenge for the contemporary reader. In this darkness, the contemporary reader can find the light directed towards us, although still moving away. The one who is willing to comprehend contemporaneity is like a lover who has a date, but will not be able to make it.

Not only is the *Now*, our *Now*, distant from us, but it is intangible as well. Although submerged therein, we cannot catch it. *Now* is always “not yet,” “already after,” “too early,” “too late.” In *Now* works darkness, which transforms it not only in the chronological sense. Deep in the darkness of *Now* there is light which will never reach us, even though it is heading towards us relentlessly.

## 8

Modernity is inscribed in *Now*, pointing to what is archaic. Only the person who discerns in the most modern and newest things the indicators of the *Then*, the archaic signature, can call himself modern. Archaic means: close to arche (ἀρχή), that is, close to the beginning. The beginning is not only situated in chronological order. The beginning is modern, it is happening and keeps affecting events, like an embryo living in the tissues of a mature organism, like a child living in the psyche of an adult. *Now*, the escaping

contemporariness, stays close to the beginning, which bangs the strongest on the door of existence in *Now*.

Historians of art and historians of literature know that there is a secret link between what is archaic and what is modern. Not only because the most archaic forms fascinate most now, but above all because the key to modernity is hidden in oblivion and prehistory.



*Les Halles in Paris, 1899*

The avant-garde is groping its way to what is primordial and archaic. Thus, we can say that modernity can be reached through archaeology. Ar-

chaeology does not send us to the distant past, but to what can by no means be experienced in *Now*. Modernity is nothing else but the non-experienced part of the experienced, the part which has not been got through to yet, due to the massiveness of the experienced or its huge traumatic weight. Modern man is carefully looking for the non-experienced. To be modern means to return to the modernity in which we have never been before.

**9**

Contemporary (modern) is not only the person who senses the inaccessible light in the darkness of *Now*, but also the person who discerns the possibility of transformation in the overlaps and interruptions of time and who discovers connections with another time, the person who can read history in a new way, “quote” it not in a freely to choose manner, but as a result of an obligatory challenge to which he cannot refuse to answer. As if the invisible light stuck in the darkness of *Now* cast a shadow on the past and as if the future, hit by the bundle of the shadow, became capable of responding to the darkness of *Now*. Walter Benjamin wrote that the historical guidelines included in the images of the past can be deciphered only in very specific moments of their own history.

**10**

In *The Painter of Modern Life*, by Baudelaire, there is a mysterious and dense fragment, very difficult to translate. In French, it reads as follows: “Pour que toute modernité soit digne de devenir antiquité, il faut que la beauté mystérieuse que la vie humaine y met involontairement en ait été extraite.” It was translated into English by Jonathan Mayne, and reads as follows (Phaidon Press, London 2003, pp. 13-14): “In short, for any ‘modernity’ to be worthy of one day taking its place as ‘antiquity,’ it is necessary for the mysterious beauty which human life accidentally puts into it to be distilled from it.”

In the streets of Paris, contemporaneity (modernity) is constantly becoming Antiquity and this becoming is particularly visible in *Les Halles*, as the area is under continuous reconstruction and the land between the Catherine de' Medici's astronomer tower, St. Honoré Street, the St. Eustace Church, and St. Denis Street resembles an excavation site, ruins, and a UFO all at the same time. The big hole of *Les Halles* is full of waste, trash, and rags.

Some rags seem to be of particular importance to the archaeologist working on Parisian streets. A piece of old moquette, a shred of a sheet, shapeless drapery, an old garb placed by the cleaners perpendicularly to the sidewalk – make a kind of swab, a small dam directing the stream of water from the underground tap, through the gutter, to the drain. The rag is dirty. It is covered with garbage and waste. This is why it proves interesting to the historian searching for Antiquity within the expanse of Paris.

Georges Didi-Huberman wrote a lot about rags in his book entitled *Ninfa moderna*, reminding us that this shapeless object, the cloth gathering inside the “memory of the pre-era,” became the subject of photographic works of art, which gained recognition and fame and which sell really well in the best galleries of New York. The author of the series of fifty-nine photographs of Parisian gutter rags, entitled *Barrage* (1998) is Steve McQueen. “The modernity of the images of Steve McQueen – says Georges Didi-Huberman – does not raise any doubt. But where does their untimeliness lie? The immortals, by definition, evoke something from the unawareness of time. What unknowing genealogies do these photos reveal?” What other “intimate images” of Antiquity are inscribed there?

The Parisian rags, “the draperies of the sidewalk” (as Georges Didi-Huberman dubs them) were of interest to Benjamin and to artists before Steve McQueen. Benjamin wrote that Paris, as the capital city of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, kept revealing the “signatures of times” and brought Antiquity to light. The rag was, and still is, such a signature, and it is the task of the anthropologist and archaeologist to distill from the rag “the mysterious beauty which human life accidentally puts into it.” In 1988 Denise Colomb took a series of photos of the Parisian cobblestones, gutters, and, of course,

*Hades in Les Halles. Antiquity within the Expanse of Paris*

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rags. In 1967–1968, Alain Fleischer, the author of avant-garde movies, theoretical essays, and performance installations created an excellent series of photographs entitled *Landscapes of Cobblestone*, also with rags in the centre.



*Les Halles in Paris, 1908*

In the 1930s, gutters, cobblestones, and rag dams, the draperies of the city, the “memory in tatters” in *Les Halles*, where photographed by Germaine Krull and László Moholy-Nagy, and in the 1890s by Eugène Atget, whose works illustrate the present text.

“How does a rag thrown in a gutter give a modern person, so to say, the chance to catch the intimate image of the *Then* in a fragment or a piece?” – asks Georges Didi-Huberman. Benjamin included a fragment on the street rag as “das innerste Bild,” about the innermost image of the *Then*, in the “P” section of the *Passages*, devoted to the streets of Paris. The innermost character of all trivial items is shaped by their metamorphoses. “Paris is a moving city,” it penetrates and uncovers its viscera: “What do we know about street corners, curbs, the architecture of cobblestones – we, who have never felt the warmth of the cobblestones and angular pebbles with our own bare feet, we, who have never pondered whether we would be comfortable lying on uneven sidewalk slabs? [...] The one who wants to know how much we are at home in the viscera should yield to the intoxication of wandering along the streets, the gloom of which resembles the womb of a prostitute. Antiquity.”

Here is the comment by Georges Didi-Huberman: “We are on the street. But what do we know about it if we do not touch it with naked hands (like a ragman), if we do not feel the cobblestones with our exhausted body (like a tramp), if we do not absorb its darkness, hoping to sink in a kind of womb (like a starved man seeking for a prostitute)?”. This fragment, like many others, is pinned down by Benjamin by the word *Antike*. Antiquity. Does the modernity of the street manifest itself as the innermost (visceral) image of *Then*?

Baudelaire compared the gutter to “the deadly womb” and “the infernal river.” The gutter rag rests, or transforms (swelling with water and waste) near the gutter, a hole, a descent, the entry to Hades. As Benjamin said: “In ancient Greece, places were shown leading to the underground world. Our incited existence is also a landscape where the road to hell emerges from hidden places – a landscape full of mysterious places, where dreams flow.”

To follow openings: gutters or descents to the underground, fountains, passages, chamber pots and brothels as stations leading to Hades, haunted by the former times – to read *Then*. Paris: an unembraced body, the tangle

of intestines, in which times overlap, illuminate, and uncover their own complexity. An ancient labyrinth: “To be understood, the street must be separated from the former notion of the road. These two things are totally different in terms of their mythological nature. The notion of a road entails the trepidation of going astray, which surrounded the nomads like a halo. Even today, while on fickle turns of roads, a lonely wanderer might sense the power of the ancient instructions on how not to get lost. But it seems that the one who goes on a street does not need a guiding hand or an advisor. The one who goes on a street does not want to wander around, but yields to the fascination with the monotonous asphalt ribbon ahead. But it is the labyrinth that creates the synthesis of both types of the trepidation and monotonous wandering. Antiquity.”





## GLOSSES

Michał Kucharski  
**From Generation to Generation...**

Amidst the chaos of contemporary life, in times when some of us have problems finding a single moment for even the barest humanistic reflection, speaking about tradition (in particular, the classical tradition) might seem absurd – and academic research into Antiquity, a totally useless undertaking. Time and again I have heard it asked: “who needs this?” or “what good is any of this?” Those who ask such questions perceive the classical tradition as totally impractical, believing contemporary people should turn to the future, rather than gaze back upon the useless, ancient past.

However, the young person who has acquired a genuine interest in the culture of the ancient Greeks and Romans during secondary school or even earlier, and who then takes up such studies at the threshold of their adult life, does not think of it as impractical knowledge. What is more, “studying for idealistic reasons” – that is, the prospect of having no profession once graduating – does not deter such a person. Doubts, if any, appear only later, when that same young person, now facing the question of whether to continue their studies, must decide if it is really the classical tradition that she or he wishes to devote their life to. I was helped when making this decision – which I regret not in the slightest – by the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA). For it is here that my interest in Antiquity turned into a real research passion. The ancient world started to fill up my life, and this devotion was by no means accompanied by the feeling I was doing fruitless work. It was here, at OBTA, owing to the interdisciplinary studies of the classical tradition being carried out, that I came to understand that for the modern person, knowledge of the ancient Greeks and Romans is, in fact, altogether useful – and that the cultural

achievements of the people of those distant times do impact the life we know today.

The universal character of Antiquity has been mentioned several times in this volume, and so there is no need to repeat those pertinent remarks. Based on my own experience, I can only add that today, when the world is truly chaotic, and the crisis of identity and collapse of traditional values are advancing, delving into the classical tradition helps one to be a better person. Antiquity poses artistic challenges, serves as an aesthetic inspiration, and offers a “cure”: indeed, it holds forth a moral recipe when our societies succumb to pathologies.



Team members and participants in the *Our Mythical Childhood...* conference. From the left: Marta Adamska, Dr. Valentina Garulli, Dr. Elena Ermolaeva, Michał Kucharski. Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Conference Room, White Villa, Dobra 72 St., May 25, 2013

Participating in the research undertakings of OBTA, I also have the possibility to personally experience the community and the cross-generational research tradition. This is because the Centre carries on the mission of two great scholars – those Masters of Polish Classical Philology and Cultural Studies, Professors Kazimierz Kumaniecki and Tadeusz Zieliński.

This mission is one of discovering the legacy of Antiquity, together with deep reflection on its significance for the world of culture. The idea for this continuation is what guided the founder of OBTA, Professor Jerzy Axer, who instills OBTA's researchers – all the way down to the very youngest – with the passion he himself inherited. As Professor Axer's student and, at the same time, a student of his pupil and my mentor – Professor Katarzyna Marciniak – I have never doubted in the power of Antiquity and, standing at their side, I keep discovering the ever vital ancient past.

I realized how strong the cross-generational scholarly bond at OBTA is when I took an interest in Ovid and the role that this poet still (sic!) plays in Polish culture. This is how the advanced research project *Ovid in Polish Culture after 1945* came into being. The idea for this project arose during seminar meetings with Professor Axer and the conversations about the importance of Antiquity in contemporary culture I had with Professor Marciniak. Its roots, however, lie deeper. Reception Studies on Ovid in contemporary Polish culture are deeply indebted to OBTA's spiritual mentors – Professors Zieliński and Kumaniecki. Zieliński is considered to be a pioneer of Classical Reception Studies in general, whereas Kumaniecki analyzed the cultural phenomenon Ovidius-Polonus and he even discussed this issue at an international academic forum.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, the study of the heritage of Antiquity in Polish culture is a multifaceted pleasure – it is an “encounter” not only with a great poet who ever influences us, but also with eminent scholars who have studied this issue in the past. Ovidius, and especially Ovidius-Polonus, confirms that OBTA is a perfect venue for such a unique “encounter.”

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Kazimierz Kumaniecki, *Echa Owidiusza w polskiej literaturze mieszczańskiej w. XVII*, “Meander” 5 (1950), pp. 563–573 or idem, *Dwutysiąclecie urodzin Owidiusza*, “Meander” 12 (1957), pp. 317–318, and especially: Nicolae Barbu, Eugen Dobroiu, Mihai Nasta, *Acta conventus omnium gentium Ovidianis studiis fovendis, Tomis, a die XXV ad diem XXIX mensis Augusti MCMLXXII habiti*, Bucuresti, 1976 and Kazimierz Kumaniecki, *De Ovidii apud Polonos fatis*, “Živa Antika” 27 (1977), pp. 107–117.

Joanna Kłos  
**In the Field and on the Couch,  
or: On Two Not-So-Divergent Paths for the Reception of Antiquity**

Trying to escape the enemy, the warrior circled the city three times. At a friend's prompting, the son stabbed his mother to death. A rejected suitor brought about the injury of a beloved boy with a discus. A beautiful aristocratic woman sneaked out at nights to date a young poet. An emperor, enamoured of his own voice, neglected his reign to develop his artistic career. These themes, taken from Greek and Roman literature, are by no means surprising to its enthusiasts,<sup>1</sup> but for the unacquainted they may seem intriguing, or even to have been created with the sole purpose of entertaining bored readers. But the feeling of shallow sensationalism is illusory, as a wealth of reflections on difficult and discussion-raising issues can be drawn from a deeper interpretation of these texts – like the notion of honour in battle, the meaning of revenge and redemption, the power of god-like creatures over humans, the relationship between the experience of the author and his works, and the shaping of the public image of rulers. Nevertheless, such a selection of topics that aims at inducing the mass-recipient to be more active intellectually is possible in almost all areas of knowledge. “The favourite dishes of the Middle Ages, served on lordly [...] tables, would today be most appreciated by the fans of soup kitchens”;<sup>2</sup> “the Inuit tradition tells us to dance wearing gloves even inside”;<sup>3</sup> “one of the

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<sup>1</sup> Let us quote the sources: the duel between Achilles and Hector – Homer, *Iliad* 22.136–166; the deadly stab of Clytemnestra – Aeschylus, *The Libation Bearers* 896–930; the death of Hyacinth told by Ovid – *Metamorphoses* 10.162–219; the clandestine meetings of Catullus and Lesbia – *Carmen* 68; performances by Nero – Suetonius, *Nero* 20–25.

<sup>2</sup> Krzysztof Kowalewski, *Słodko-kwaśne średniowiecze*, “Mówią wieki” 12/599 (2009), pp. 30–35, online: <http://www.mowiaiewieki.pl/index.php?page=artykul&id=263> (consulted: Nov. 21, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> See the website *Vill's Ethno Atlas*: <https://villsethnoatlas.wordpress.com/2013/01/16/inuici-7/> (consulted: Nov. 21, 2013).

smallest frogs in the world has no ears [...] but can hear with its mouth”<sup>4</sup> etc.

There is a multitude of such anecdotes and curios, and any of them could be used for illustrating an obvious thesis: with such an accumulation of information and free access to all types of data, classical culture faces huge competition when it comes to reaching its recipients. Antiquity, less and less present in the canon of teaching and in the concept of general knowledge, has become for us an option rather than a necessity; one of many ways to pursue our interests rather than the foundation of education.



Joanna Kłos in the University of Warsaw Library, Jan. 20, 2012

Nonetheless, this re-evaluation does not mean that Antiquity is disappearing from our culture together with the passing of subsequent decades. Quite the opposite: publications of sources and the rich literature on the subject of Antiquity are still being published, relevant museums and monuments are still visited by crowds, films continue to be made on the basis of ancient texts, classical performances are staged, and novels and poems

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<sup>4</sup> See the website of the “Focus” magazine: <http://www.focus.pl/przyroda/zaby-slysza-przez-otwor-gebowy-9852> (consulted: Nov. 21, 2013).

dealing with Antiquity are still being written. However, it is impossible not to notice that, with so many possibilities for spending time, communing with Antiquity is hardly a given, and thus we need to deliberately cultivate the motivation to do so.

This motivation, I think, may have two kinds of bases. Sometimes we look at the cultures of Greece and Rome as at “Otherness,” a cultural space which is diametrically different than the one surrounding us today. Novels with narratives full of details concerning bygone realities, lectures of experts explaining the political or moral background of the creation of any of the ancient texts, the note on a museum exhibit with a detailed description of the motif presented on a vase – all this can give the impression of plunging into an unknown world. We might feel like an anthropologist who finds their research area in the culture of more than two thousand years ago. Obviously, such an “expedition” gives pleasure and adds variety to everyday realities (and, sometimes, is an escape from personal problems). It also forces the mind and imagination to act and open up to new facets of said “Otherness,” ones that are simply astounding, because they are unknown to our own culture.

Of course, as targets of this type of research, classical Greece and Rome are by no means exceptional when compared to other cultures – we could direct our interest in the same manner towards Australian native tribes, the former Inca Empire, or the Empire of Japan. Nonetheless, once we have made our choice and our gaze has fallen on Classical Antiquity, that epoch will become exceptional to us in the personal dimension. The awareness that we have found ourselves on the path of intellectual adventure by choice rather than by necessity – which was the case for former generations, forced by that day’s canon – will make us search more independently and more boldly interpret intriguing questions found in the sources. Thus, we will not be like tourists guided along a set route, but like travellers, in our own individual micro-scale, plunging into a perilous hinterland. In this way, classical culture will become a source of subjectively significant discoveries for us. The discoveries we make will broaden our horizons, but above all they will induce us to reflect on our identity – as each expedition into exotic lands leads to their confrontation

with our own cultural homeland. So, whenever something in the thinking or customs of the Greeks and Romans astounds us, this will reflect our taboos and prejudices; if something raises our objections, it will help us discern our strong attachment to the values which we obtained from our own culture; finally, if there is something that causes admiration, this will allow us to look critically at the reality which surrounds us. Thus, like an anthropologist or traveller who returns from a journey with a bag full of new experiences and conclusions, the most important of which will involve getting to know oneself better, we perceive Classical Antiquity as “Otherness” and, by extracting there from what seems strange, untypical, or even unimaginable, we arrive at defining our own needs and limitations.

Nevertheless, since the area of the world which for centuries has felt obliged to draw from the ancient tradition is so huge, numerous contemporary cultures use a method to refer to the area in question which differs from the one presented above. They perceive Antiquity as “Ourness” rather than “Otherness” and refer to it as continuation rather than confrontation. Starting with classical sources as a base for timeless or universal motifs, we can treat the issues tackled in such sources as a reference point for current worries and social problems. Thus, we reopen the ancient books to rewrite and update their content, so that, once introduced in contemporary language, they may help illustrate and describe our present crises. Stagings in which the choirs from Greek tragedy sing out the war trauma of recent years,<sup>5</sup> historical novels with heroes in which allusions to contemporary politicians can be found,<sup>6</sup> and academic works which look for the sources of our way of perceiving such issues as freedom, race, or sex in the views

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<sup>5</sup> The theatre performance entitled *Ifigenia* directed by Antonina Grzegorzewska of 2008, in which the choir was disguised as a group of attackers from the Moscow’s Dubrovka Theatre, can serve as an example here – more on the performance, see, e.g., Joanna Derkaczew, *Kto się boi Ifigenii?*, “Gazeta Wyborcza” 266, Nov. 14, 2008, online: <http://www.e-teatr.pl/pl/artykuly/62229.html> (consulted: Nov. 21, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> What comes to mind here is, obviously, the Cicero trilogy by Robert Harris. More on the subject – e.g. entry in the blog of a reviewer of “The Guardian,” Charlotte Higgins: *Who’s the Modern Cicero – Barack Obama or Peter Mandelson?*, online: <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/charlottehigginsblog/2009/oct/20/classics-barack-obama> (consulted: Nov. 21, 2013).



of the ancients thereon<sup>7</sup> – these examples show how often Antiquity penetrates our ways of analyzing the contemporary world. However, this way of communing with the classical tradition does not have much in common with the “expedition” described above – it requires reading ancient texts not in order to go beyond the boundaries of cognition, but rather to find in their content things that are close to us. Instead of being like anthropologists who set off to faraway countries, we become psychoanalysts who, equipped with a tool in the form of ancient sources, listen to the spirit of our epoch trying to diagnose its problems and to search for their explanation in the distant past.

In consequence, once we first discover how easily various ancient motifs adapt to contemporary reality, it will be easier for us obtain a better understanding of the epochs that followed Antiquity. We will realize that, in the same way as we interpret and transform ancient works today in our struggles with reality, this same activity must also have been significant to our predecessors who viewed the architecture, art, or literature inspired by Antiquity as a manner for determining their own identities or expounding ideologies which they considered their own. Therefore, both while searching for “Otherness” and treating ancient culture as “Ourness,” we specify in detail our own cultural identity; what is more, the process opens us to both our contemporariness and the past.

It was not a coincidence that the person dealt with above, who is in a relationship with the classical legacy, has been described as “we,” without division into researchers-experts and amateurs and the authors of works inspired by Antiquity and their addressees. These roles may be interchangeable, depending on what text of classical culture we are dealing with and what competences we have obtained to study it. Similarly, the approaches to the classical legacy described here do not exclude one another: indeed, in our current, pluralistic culture, changing between the

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<sup>7</sup> What I mean here is above all the series “Ancients and Moderns” by the British publishing house I.B. Tauris, including, without limitation: Page duBois, *Slavery. Antiquity and Its Legacy*, London 2009; Brooke Holmes, *Gender. Antiquity and Its Legacy*, London 2012; Denise Eileen McCoskey, *Race. Antiquity and Its Legacy*, London 2012.

methods of Antiquity's reception can be chosen in the same free manner as interest in Antiquity can be freely chosen – whether made just once or repeated multiple times. However, regardless of how we locate our search on the contemporary map of dialogue with Antiquity, all choices shall produce a common result. For each reaching back to the treasury of motifs from that epoch, whether in order to present it as shockingly distant and different than ours, or as dangerously close and similar, shall always lead to the construction of a certain narrative about ourselves. And today, in an epoch full of blurred definitions and eroded boundaries, is there any need more pressing, more contemporary than self-awareness? It is exactly this type of culture-creating potential – hidden in the duels of Homer's heroes, the begging for mercy by the mother being murdered, or the pompous performances of the Roman emperor – that will preserve the classical tradition within our present discourse, even though that tradition lost its central role in our culture's formation long ago.

Sylwia Chmielewska  
**Playable Antiquity\***

*Perseus and Andromeda* (1983) is one of the first computer games based on classical themes. It is a very simple and short text adventure game, available i.a. for ZX Spectrum, Atari 8-Bit, BBC Micro, and Commodore 64. The game is a part of the *Mysterious Adventures* series created by Brian Howarth; it is also known as Adventure no 9. A few years ago the game was converted into a web browser format and today it can be played using any browser.<sup>1</sup>

From the title the player can guess that s/he takes the role of Perseus. Our hero's quest is to get the equipment necessary to fulfill the task of killing Medusa and ultimately saving Andromeda. Perseus is controlled by the player, who has to type simple commands, such as "go east," "give water" or "get shield"; after typing one of these commands, information about any change in Perseus' current situation appears on screen. The game is a simplified version of the myth, full of puzzles (by 1980s standards), mainly involving working out the order in which the player has to perform actions so as to obtain the items necessary to complete the main task. For example, in the Temple of Athena, Perseus first must pray (command "pray"), and then wait ("wait"). If the player fails to perform any of these actions, the hero will not receive the shield from the goddess.

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\* Parts of this gloss are drawn from my two theses written under the supervision of Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales," University of Warsaw (Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization): *Reinterpretacje mitów greckich w kulturze popularnej na przykładzie wybranych gier komputerowych i konsolowych* [Reinterpretations of Greek Myths in Popular Culture Exemplified by Chosen Computer and Console Games] (BA thesis, July 2011) and *Recepcja historii i kultury starożytnej Grecji i Rzymu w wybranych komputerowych grach strategicznych* [Modern Reception of Ancient Greek & Roman History and Culture as Exemplified in Selected Strategy Computer Games] (MA thesis, Sept. 2013).

<sup>1</sup> The game is available for free on <http://www.ifiction.org/games> (consulted: Nov. 20, 2013).

Perseus is a “text” – he is not characterized, and none of his personal qualities are described at all. We only know that he exists and – based on the information provided by Greek myth – we know the task he must complete. The other elements of the myth are not told explicitly. Thus, the game is for a player who already knows (to some extent) the myth of Perseus. A player unfamiliar with the hero’s story probably would be unable to complete the game; s/he would not know that to kill Medusa one must first look at her reflection in the shield and then cut her head off (commands: “look shield,” “cut medusa”). The impact of the famous 1981 film *Clash of the Titans* (directed by Desmond Davies) is also visible in the game. It was probably under the influence of this Hollywood production that the author made Perseus hold the shield alone and look on the reflection of the Gorgon, while mythology often tells us of Athena holding a polished shield over the head of the monster.<sup>2</sup>

This surprising – and yet very natural – combination of a mythical past with a medium so strongly connected with the latest technology is plain to the naked eye in the case of *Perseus and Andromeda*. And this is but a product of the 1980’s, a simple text adventure game, created when the genres of computer games we are now familiar with were first being developed. With the passage of time, more and more games referring to Antiquity came out. Together with the ongoing process of diversification of computer game genres, an extensive catalogue of “antique” games began to develop, ones presenting an extremely wide range of themes and characters. Some of them are completely de-contextualized, others are placed in an ancient context – though this context differs from the canonical version of the myth – and yet others will preserve the original meaning. What is more important is that every game based on Graeco-Roman Antiquity contains a series of symbols and references to specific elements that belong to ancient tradition, whether it be the most heavily exploited and freely modified figure of Hercules, the now less known story of Perseus, or the tragic and extremely versatile myth of Medea.

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<sup>2</sup> For various versions of the myth see, e.g., Pierre Grimal, *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Mythology*, ed. Stephen Kershaw, trans. A.R. Maxwell-Hyslop, Blackwell, Oxford–Cambridge, Mass. 1990, pp. 342–343.

Some games that draw upon Classical Antiquity have taken a special place in the history of computer games. Set in the Roman Empire, the series of economic strategy games – *Caesar I–IV*, first released in 1992 – has determined the overall vision of this genre. The first games in the *Caesar* series and their successors: *Zeus: Master of Olympus* and *Master of Atlantis: Poseidon*, were so popular that dozens of other computer strategy games presenting the world of Graeco-Roman Antiquity emerged. Today one of the most valued games of this genre (i.e., strategy games as a whole, not only those set in Antiquity) is *Rome: Total War*, which was released in 2004.



Sylwia Chmielewska giving her poster presentation at the *Our Mythical Childhood...* conference, Faculty of "Artes Liberales," Conference Room, White Villa, Dobra 72 St., May 25, 2013

There is a very interesting story connected with this game. Since the original version, although very well researched, contained some inconsistencies, a group of enthusiasts decided to create a modification of the game on their own, one which would minimize the anachronisms and present the historical realities as accurately as possible. This modification is called

*Rome: Total Realism*, and although it was not created by the studio which produced the canonical version of the game, it has gained such enormous popularity that today it is considered by many players to be an essential extension of the game.

One can find a huge number of such “mods” (modifications)<sup>3</sup> of the game *Rome: Total War* on the Internet. Some extend the game by adding new battles known from Antiquity or by adding or modifying the existing military units, while others carry the action into completely different realities, for example into the world of *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings* or even *With Fire and Sword* by Henryk Sienkiewicz.<sup>4</sup> Most interesting, however, are those modifications that embellish the game with historical motifs omitted in the basic version of *Rome: Total War*. Some of the titles even refer to the Latin language (*Roma Surrectum* or *Europa Barbarorum*), not to mention the historically accurate Latin terminology that is widely used in these modifications, as well as in the canonical version of the game.

The *Rome: Total Realism* mod, however, changes the dynamics of the game: the battles become unbearably long and extremely tiresome. Yet how inspiring this game (or perhaps, its ancient content) must be, since its users exchange gameplay,<sup>5</sup> the most important quality of any computer game, for an encounter with a realistically recreated Roman history!

But in order to adapt ancient motifs to the idiosyncratic rules of each genre of computer game, one usually has to give up any aspiration to complete accuracy in adapting the Graeco-Roman world, whether that concerns

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<sup>3</sup> See, e.g., <http://www.rometotalrealism.org>, <http://www.europabarbarorum.com> (consulted: Nov. 20, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> Henryk Sienkiewicz (1846–1916) was a Polish novelist, Nobel Prize laureate (1905), and author of the internationally acclaimed novel *Quo Vadis*. His Trilogy (*With Fire and Sword*, *The Deluge*, *Sir Michael*), set in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, is the most popular and beloved historical cycle among Polish readers.

<sup>5</sup> Gameplay consists i.a. of the rules of the game, its dynamics, the challenges the player faces, the way in which the player interacts with the game (for example, whether by using a mouse, or a keyboard and a mouse, or a controller to the console), etc. More intuitively, the term refers to the player’s overall experience with a game, except its graphics and sound. See, e.g., <http://www.ign.com/blogs/jackfuller/2013/02/05/why-gameplay-is-king> (consulted: Nov. 20, 2013).

mythology, history, or culture. And yet, despite the many simplifications and inconsistencies with the historical or mythological tradition, computer games seem to be a very good source of knowledge about Antiquity. The *God of War* series (2005–2013) is worth mentioning here. Highly valued by players, this outstandingly successful and popular action-adventure game presents perhaps the largest catalogue of reinterpreted themes and characters from Greek mythology.

*God of War* lets the player control a deeply tragic, Herculean hero – or anti-hero – who, after murdering his family, has to wash away the miasma to regain his peace of mind. Spartan Kratos (the protagonist) is a grievously tormented character: he will never know peace, and will ultimately destroy the corrupted and vengeful gods. The game presents a brutal and bloody vision of Greek mythology, drawing upon the aesthetics of gore, but it is also an excellent, spectacular interpretation of the ancient world. For the price of Hollywoodesque exaggeration and the hectolitres of blood spilled in the game, the player sees the image of a psychologically complicated, haunted anti-hero, a vision of a demigod, who finds his way to self-destruction, a character who – despite being extremely violent towards innocent people – elicits the player's pity and fear! Kratos, compared to protagonists of other games, is a unique and unusual figure: a mad, stripped of humanity, tragic, devastated by the gods, and determined avenger. I believe that in the next few years players will come to expect just such characters in computer games: individuals with expressively defined characteristics, guided by their own sense of justice and – above all – utterly negative, mad villains unsuccessfully seeking relief from pain.

The *God of War* series' revolutionary interpretation of mythological themes, which nevertheless remains faithful to the ancient world in many respects, is something absolutely unique among other games inspired by Graeco-Roman Antiquity. In this virtual world of Kratos, myths cease to be merely the background of a cheap plot: they become carriers of meaning. One glance at Persephone, who – betrayed by the gods and unhappy in marriage with Hades – seeks to plunge the world into chaos, or at Hercules, jealous of the famous Kratos and seeking revenge on him, is enough to prove that. The divine universe and the human world interpenetrate each

other in the game: nothing can happen without the interference of the gods. But of course not all the motifs and characters were given significant meaning. There is still the world of monsters, powerful and enormous enemies, among which Minotaurs, Cerberuses, Satyrs, Gorgons, and others can be found. But it is from this very connection between a tragic, ancient story and the universe of wild and terrifying creatures, also drawn from mythology, that the series gains such great popularity.

Classical themes are widely used in a number of games.<sup>6</sup> It is interesting that one of the newest (and most dominant) forms of cultural expression derives from the longstanding culture of ancient Greece and Rome, so deeply rooted in European civilization. It is we – the players – who indirectly decide which theme or motif is the most attractive for us. For as we all may observe, these myths have never ceased and will never cease to be alive and compelling.

Studies on themes drawn from Classical Antiquity that appear in computer games are still very limited. Yet the presence of ancient tradition in this medium, which until recently was treated as an object of entertainment only, says so much about ourselves! In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, one of the primary pop-cultural sources of information about Antiquity is – apart from the cinema and the Internet – computer games. Young people are enthusiastic about learning the mechanics of each new game and discovering its world. No one checks the level of their knowledge, but if they want to successfully complete the game *Perseus and Andromeda*, they need to know the trick Perseus used to kill Medusa. If they want to win the battle in *Rome: Total War*, they have to know that the ropes used in the Roman siege weapons were made of moisture-sensitive animal sinews, which means that scorpia will be ineffective in the rain. The knowledge offered by computer games is attractive and absorbing – not least when it is complicated.

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<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., the following lists of computer games based on Graeco-Roman Antiquity: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Video\\_games\\_set\\_in\\_the\\_Roman\\_Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Video_games_set_in_the_Roman_Empire), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Ancient\\_Rome\\_video\\_games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Ancient_Rome_video_games), [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiction\\_set\\_in\\_ancient\\_Greece#Video\\_games](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiction_set_in_ancient_Greece#Video_games), <http://www.mobygames.com/game-group/mythology-greek> (consulted: Nov. 20, 2013).





Graeco-Roman mythology and computer games are my passions, ones I have been able to wed through cooperation with OBTA, especially with the Director of the Centre – Professor Katarzyna Marciniak. The inspiring environment and academic staff of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” consisting of experts in various fields, enables me to attempt to broaden the perspectives of research into the reception of Antiquity by examining its life within the world of computer games. The adaptability of Graeco-Roman culture to this medium no longer raises doubts. What is more, thanks to computer games Antiquity comes to life and becomes closer to us than ever, because we – the players – shape it and become its masters.

*Katarzyna Marciniak*

## THE ANCIENT TRADITION IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY – CUI BONO?

*For Professors  
Jerzy Axer and Jan Kieniewicz*

I WAS BORN TO SHARE LOVE, NOT HATE, Antigone says in Sophocles' drama – one of the most famous tragedies of Classical Antiquity.<sup>1</sup> She addresses these words to Creon, ruler of Thebes, who knows little about sharing love at this point, but will know everything before the play ends, when he loses his son and his wife as a result of his mistaken decisions. First, though, he will condemn Antigone to death by walling her alive in a tomb – an ironically cruel punishment for a young woman who threw a handful of soil on Polynices' body and with that symbolic gesture (one we today also repeat when saying goodbye to our dearly departed) fulfilled the funeral rite toward her traitor brother.

Sophocles' *Antigone* is a strange play. It has been read by students, scholars, and artists for more than two thousand years. Studied at school in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (where it still occupies an important place despite the increasingly radical reduction of required reading and deconstruction of the canon) and analyzed at academic centres, but also at theatres by successive directors wanting to try their hand at staging this Greek masterpiece, *Antigone* defies any unequivocal interpretation. We have to honestly admit

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<sup>1</sup> Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. Marianne McDonald, in *Greek Tragedy: Antigone, Medea, Bacchae*, NHB, London 2005, p. 16 (v. 523).

we still do not understand it. After all, we should not treat seriously the differentiation between the divine and human sense of what is right that is typical of school interpretations. Only one thing is right. Polynices must be buried; Sophocles leaves no room for doubt that it is Antigone who is right, and who twice repeats her gesture toward her dead brother – the second time after Creon orders Polynices' body to be uncovered again.

Indeed, it is Creon who seems to be the play's true central character<sup>2</sup> – in fact, Antigone's very name in the title may well be a clue that we should carefully observe her antagonist. Antigone exists so that Creon can come into full being. She keeps talking about love, but remains cold in her emotions. This is not surprising. Antigone is frozen by the thought of death. She has lost her mother, father, both brothers, and she knows that she, too, will die; she has long crossed the shadow-line. She shares love and risks her life, but not for her flesh-and-blood beloved Haemon, not for Ismene, who is so true and alive in her fear, but for the ghost of Polynices. From this perspective, Antigone's punishment of imprisonment in a tomb changes little. Rather, it seals her life with the dead.

Things are different with Creon, who defends his earthly, very real power and frantically holds onto life even though Thanatos snatches away those dear to him one by one, punishing the powerful tyrant for renouncing shared love. The Greek prefix *συν-*, which we can render as “shared,” becomes the key to understanding the lesson Logos teaches both Creon and us, as well – the play's spectators or readers.

When ultimate matters are at stake, the battle starts about human dignity – about remembrance and identity. In this battle the living have a duty to defend the dead. When ultimate matters are at stake, we must not exclude anyone from the community, not even traitors. Those who try to do so condemn themselves to exclusion and lose their near and dear. When ultimate matters are at stake, a certain law comes into force – the one which the Polish philosopher and expert in classical studies, Adam Krokiewicz,

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<sup>2</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Antygona – pierwsza męczennica chrześcijańska* (A conversation with Jerzy Axer about Antigone as the first Christian martyr), “Teologia Polityczna” 2 (2004–2005), pp. 112–120, [http://www.teologiapolityczna.pl/assets/numery\\_tp/tp2/011-Antygon-J.Axer.pdf](http://www.teologiapolityczna.pl/assets/numery_tp/tp2/011-Antygon-J.Axer.pdf) (consulted: Oct. 14, 2013).

writing about Priam's meeting with Achilles in *The Iliad*, called "the law of the contrite heart."<sup>3</sup> This means it was already codified by Homer, the earliest Poet and teacher of the Greeks we know. Priam comes to Achilles' tent at night – risking his own life by sneaking into enemy territory to defend the dignity of his son Hector after death. He falls on his knees before Achilles, kisses his hands – hands that still carry traces of the Trojan warrior's dried blood – and pleads for the return of his son's mutilated body so that it can be buried.



*The Judgement of Paris, Etruscan bronze mirror 4<sup>th</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup> c. B.C.*

Neither the authority of the Greek commanders nor the cunning of Odysseus, nor even Nestor's wise advice had such an impact on Achilles

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<sup>3</sup> See Adam Krokiewicz, *Moralność Homera i etyka Hezjoda*, Pax, Warszawa 1959.

as that meeting in the dead of night. The bravest hero of Troy – he, too, well behind the shadow-line – only then renounces hubris, the blinding arrogance that leads to hatred, takes away those dearest to one's heart (Achilles lost his beloved Patroclus), and strips one of dignity. Perhaps that is exactly why the ancient gods considered it the gravest human sin – not out of fear that, full of hubris, we will try to be their equals, but on the contrary: out of regret that hubris will make us lose all that is best in us and drift apart from the beings in whose image and likeness we were made by Prometheus.

Homer, who had access to the world of the gods thanks to his close relationship with the Muses, made sure that this divine message resounded loud and clear for his contemporary and future listeners: that night in the Greek camp, Priam and Achilles met in order to stop sharing hatred for each other, to share the love of their dead and to honour them. Unfortunately Creon lived before Homer and could not learn from him. Besides, the teachings of poets do not have the power of commands, and their rightness is usually not understood until it is too late.

From the perspective of the following centuries, Sophocles' message of sharing love seems very Christian. It is not without reason that Antigone is called a Christian martyr.<sup>4</sup> In the opera by Mikis Theodorakis she even becomes a symbol of evangelical love triumphing over evil.<sup>5</sup> Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, however, this is not a love that conquers all. Its triumph, at least on Earth, is limited – and paid for with many sacrifices. But the ancients already knew this well. Only that we had idealized their souls and minds for a long time, seeing them as infallible, strong, and knowing no doubt. It was not until the experience of two world wars and the totalitarianisms of the previous century that we were forced to look at the past anew. That is when we noticed Virgil was full of doubts even when he wrote: *Amor omnia vincit* (*Ecl.* 10, 69). Indeed, his Arcadia was a paradise

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<sup>4</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Antygona...*, op. cit., pp. 112–120.

<sup>5</sup> See also Gail Holst-Warhaft, *Theodorakis's Classical Trilogy: Opera for the People? Part IV: Antigone*, <http://en.mikis-theodorakis.net/index.php/article/articleview/290/1/49/>; [http://triceratops.brynmawr.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10066/5791/Holst-Warhaft\\_27\\_1-2.pdf?sequence=1](http://triceratops.brynmawr.edu/dspace/bitstream/handle/10066/5791/Holst-Warhaft_27_1-2.pdf?sequence=1) (consulted: Nov. 5, 2013).

for the chosen and the decision on who would be among the fortunate ones to find shelter from war in the shade of the beech tree belonged to the rulers of the new world – just like in 1967 A.D., when the generals who led the military junta in Greece decided to ban the works of Theodorakis together with many ancient plays, and not to kill the composer himself, but to send him to the prison camp of Oropos.<sup>6</sup>

For Virgil, as for Theodorakis two thousand years later, talent – great and unquestionable talent – was a ticket to life, but the work of the Poet seems marked by the burden of survivor’s guilt.<sup>7</sup> Why should a gift that you receive in an incomprehensible way, or maybe even undeservedly, accidentally, decide about your life? A shadow looms over Virgil’s Arcadia. Actually, the beech is the tree on which Aeëtes hung the golden fleece in honour of Ares – the god of war, and Arcadia was ruled by Lycaon who, receiving Zeus – the god of hospitality – as a guest, served him human flesh. “Et in Arcadia ego” – Death has declared on many an occasion, speaking in the works of artists.

Today we see shadows more sharply than ever, but at the same time more than ever do we need Arcadia, even if it is imperfect. The community based on ancient heritage is even more important and more powerful than that which Antigone defended from Creon. It reaches over and above blood ties and citizenship of one polis. Built over the course of almost three thousand years now, by way of peace and treaties as well as conquests and colonization, it quickly stepped out beyond the geographical boundaries of the Mediterranean region. It is an intellectual community, or even more – a spiritual one. Antiquity is a culture code that is comprehensible in every location that the Graeco-Roman heritage stood a chance of reaching, from

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<sup>6</sup> See John A. Katris [Giannes Katres], *Eyewitness in Greece: The Colonels Come to Power*, New Critics Press, St. Louis 1971; Gonda A.H. van Steen, *Playing by the Censors’ Rules? Classical Drama Revived under the Greek Junta (1967–1974)*, “Journal of the Hellenic Diaspora” 27 (2001), pp. 133–194. Earlier, Ioannis Metaxas had noticed the “dangers” hidden in *Antigone* and banned its staging, see Bruce Merry, entry *Censorship*, in eiusdem, *Encyclopedia of Modern Greek Literature*, Greenwood Press, Westport, CT–London 2004, pp. 63–64.

<sup>7</sup> And for Theodorakis’ fate see, e.g., Ernst Probst, *Melina Mercouri. Der Star aus “Sonntags... nie!”*, Grin Verlag, Norderstedt 2012, p. 19.

the first Greek colony of Kyme founded in 757 B.C. to countries very distant from the Imperium Romanum, and to which Hollywood hits about heroes and gladiators make their way in today's era of globalization.



Jacek Bocheński and Katarzyna Marciniak – at an Author's evening on the occasion of the publication of Bocheński's collection of essays *Antyk po antyku* [*Antiquity after Antiquity*], Antrakt Café, Warsaw, Nov. 9, 2010

Thus, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the heritage of Greece and Rome has a sphere of influence that neither Alexander the Great nor Julius Caesar even dreamed of. And yet, paradoxically, it is in our times that we more and more often hear the question: *cui bono?* – asked of ancient culture and the humanities in general. Of course this question is no longer asked in Latin, which is gradually being ousted from school education, but its meaning is very close to the reflection of a Roman lawyer that can freely be translated as: to whose benefit?

Any reply raises more questions that are – as Jacek Bocheński provocatively writes in his volume of essays *Antyk po antyku* [*Antiquity after*

*Antiquity*] – “seemingly bizarre, but real nevertheless: What is better, locomotives or Plato? Electricity or love of one’s neighbor? The answer is that such things cannot be juxtaposed. In practice, humanity gives a different answer...”<sup>8</sup>



And this is where we come to the task (or maybe even the mission, if we dare use a word of Latin origin that sounds a little grandiose today) for the new OBTA – now a part of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” – where, in close collaboration with all the people who form the Faculty, OBTA is to conduct its future activities.

The Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA) – established by Professor Jerzy Axer over twenty years ago and developed with the support of Professor Jan Kieniewicz on a unique foundation consisting of a sense of academic community and friendship – boldly took on the challenges of modernity from its very beginning. Thanks to this, OBTA became a place enabling dialogue on very current issues – a place where researchers were never afraid to ask: *cui bono*? Let us have the courage to repeat this question in the new OBTA, since this is a question that protects humankind from hubris, as it forces us to keep thinking about whether our work makes sense, and opens us up to not only to representatives of other disciplines, but also to audiences outside the academic community – partners whose opinions are extremely important in the many different debates initiated by the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.”<sup>9</sup>

It takes such a broad perspective to fully appreciate the important role that ancient culture can play in our times. The world is changing very quickly – new discoveries, inventions, forms of social life... Nevertheless, the fundamental human dilemmas and desires have been the same for thousands of years. In the face of ultimate matters, we are just as helpless; the

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<sup>8</sup> Jacek Bocheński, *Rzeczy stare i nowe*, in eiusdem, *Antyk po antyku*, Świat Książki, Warszawa 2010 (first edition of the essay 1973), p. 41.

<sup>9</sup> See, e.g., the series *Debaty IBI AL /Debaty Artes Liberales*, initiated and led by Prof. Jan Kieniewicz (see p. 43 in the present volume).



fact that today's Eurydice dies in a hospital does nothing to reduce the despair Orpheus feels:

Unable to weep, he wept at the loss  
Of the human hope for the resurrection of the dead,  
Because he was, now, like every other mortal.  
His lyre was silent, yet he dreamed, defenseless.  
He knew he must have faith and he could not have faith.

Czesław Miłosz, part of the poem *Orpheus and Eurydice* (2002)<sup>10</sup>

The feelings and identity of anyone who faces ultimate matters alone while also being a member of a community, the issue of their dignity, their search for the meaning of life – these are just a few of the problems people have had to face from the very beginning of their conscious existence on Earth. Today, however, civilizational changes are forcing us to reflect on them particularly intensively. Indeed, for the first time ever, we now have at our disposal the means to interfere with human life on a scale unheard of before. We are entering a role previously reserved for divine beings.

In this context ancient culture, which never avoided the hardest questions and even placed them at the core of its masterpieces, creates a neutral base for us to start talking. Immersed in Antiquity, through the code built on the Graeco-Roman heritage we can carry on dialogue on the problems of our times that are too painful and create too great a divide between interlocutors for them to be discussed calmly in any other circumstances.

Analyzing this function of ancient culture is a part of Reception Studies, a discipline whose English name has been popularized by the splendid achievements of English-language researchers in recent years, though it bears noting that its methodological foundation was provided by Tadeusz Zieliński in his monograph *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte* as early as 1897, after which a serious contribution was made in the second half of the

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<sup>10</sup> Trans. Czesław Miłosz and Robert Hass, see <http://www.zsb.lublin.pl/inspiracje/2011/index.php?page=teksty> (consulted: Nov. 14, 2013). First printing of the poem is available on the website of the journal "Tygodnik Powszechny": <http://www.tygodnik.com.pl/numer/277840/milosz-wiersz.html> (consulted: Nov. 14, 2013).

20<sup>th</sup> century by German scholars who questioned the concept of meaning encoded in text, claiming that it emerged anew each time as a result of the active effort of the recipient in contact with a work.<sup>11</sup>

In research on reception, it is none other than the recipient's role that is of special importance. Successive generations interpret the heritage of Antiquity, and each new reading of that heritage provides us with knowledge about changing views and ideals.



Participants in the joint meeting of the Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” on the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tadeusz Zieliński’s birth. Among participants: the scholar’s grandson – the writer Oleg Lukyanchenko (middle row, third from the left on the chair) – and Prof. Alexander Gavrilov (middle row, fourth from the left) from the Bibliotheca Petropolitana in Saint Petersburg. IBI AL, Conference Room, White Villa, Dobra St. 72, Dec. 5, 2009

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<sup>11</sup> See Tadeusz Zieliński, *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*, Teubner, Leipzig 1897 (subsequent editions, developed by Zieliński, were published in 1908, 1912, 1929 – the last one, the most extended, was republished also in 1967, thirteen years after his death); see also Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, Mohr, Tübingen 1960; Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore–London 1978; Hans Robert Jauss, *Die Theorie der Rezeption. Rückschau auf ihre unerkannte Vorgeschichte*, Universitätsverlag, Konstanz 1987.

Antiquity serves as a mirror in which all the members of the community based on the Mediterranean tradition can look at themselves. The images appearing in this mirror are similar, since they are built using our shared ancient code, but at the same time they are slightly different for each individual member of that community, for each group, generation – all of which are also changing in relation to both global and regional events and trends. Observing these images – and OBTA’s research activity over the Centre’s more than twenty years is avant-garde in its discovery of the potential offered by the uniqueness of regional reception – researchers are given a valuable tool for diagnosing phenomena of key importance in political, social, and cultural history, including the most current such.

From the perspective of Reception Studies, the difficulties with understanding Sophocles’ *Antigone*, instead of being a hindrance to research, are rather a fascinating challenge. For this challenge enables us to trace what kind of reflection the mirror of this ancient myth has been bequeathed by authors – together with their audiences – whose voices resounded particularly dramatically at critical moments in history, when the community based on the Graeco-Roman tradition was put to the toughest test. Antigone fascinated people with her courage to oppose those who were the most powerful, despite her physical weakness, as well as with her even greater courage to choose sharing love when she had every reason to share hatred. So many images of the Theban princess have been created that when American literary critic George Steiner wrote in 1984 about the role of her myth in Western culture, he used the plural: *Antigones*.<sup>12</sup> And many more Antigones have appeared in the almost three decades since his study was published.

For again, the paradox of the special nature of reception means that these images are cohesive while also being very different. Like she was in Sophocles, Oedipus’ daughter becomes a spokesperson for all those who are excluded, stripped of their dignity and forced to fight for their

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<sup>12</sup> See George Steiner, *Antigones. The Antigone Myth in Western Literature, Art and Thought*, Oxford University Press, New York–Oxford 1984; see also Katarzyna Marciniak, *Mitologia grecka i rzymska. Bohaterowie ponad czasem*, WSzPWN, Warszawa–Bielsko-Biała 2010, p. 159.

identity. It is only the regimes that change. In the aforementioned opera by Theodorakis, encoded in the princess's character is a rebellion against the military junta that seized power in Greece in 1967.<sup>13</sup>

Theodorakis did not have far to Sophocles' Athens, some might say, adding that there is nothing unusual in a Greek artist invoking the heritage of Hellas. As observed earlier, however, the community based on the ancient tradition knows no geographical boundaries and the reception of the Antigone myth only confirms this observation. In Femi Osofisan's play *Tegonni. An African Antigone* (1999), Oedipus' daughter impersonates a Yoruba princess and her fate is intertwined with the British colonization of Nigeria. The German heavy metal band Heaven Shall Burn (today Antigone also speaks the language of more "raucous" music) by means of their album *AntiGone* (2004) pays tribute<sup>14</sup> to all those who had the courage to oppose unjust systems of power. Among them is Nelson Mandela, whose life is the subject of the song *Tree of Freedom* on that album.<sup>15</sup> In his play *The Burial at Thebes* (2004) Seamus Heaney invokes the political situation in Northern Ireland, and builds the character of Creon on a web of references to US President George W. Bush.<sup>16</sup>

The recently published volume *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage* (2011)<sup>17</sup> brings together accounts of the Theban princess's appearance in even more "exotic" – from the Western reader's point of view – regions of the world. Insofar as her presence in Georgia does not come as

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<sup>13</sup> See n. 5, 6 and 7.

<sup>14</sup> The title of the album refers to Antigone's name, but it is also a play on words (*anti* and *gone*, as in being against fading, oblivion). See also Katarzyna Marciniak, *Mitologia grecka i rzymska*, op. cit. p. 159.

<sup>15</sup> See entry *Antigone (album)*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antigone\\_\(album\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antigone_(album)) (consulted: Nov. 5, 2013).

<sup>16</sup> See Seamus Heaney, *Title Deeds: Translating a Classic*, "Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society" 148 (2004), pp. 411–426. It is worth mentioning that also an opera was created upon Heaney's drama, to the music by Dominique Le Gendre (2008), see the composer's website: <http://www.dominiquelegendre.com/burial-at-thebes.html> (consulted: Nov. 5, 2013).

<sup>17</sup> See *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage*, eds. Erin B. Mee, Helene P. Foley, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2011.

a great surprise – this is ancient Colchis, after all – references to the myth in India, Japan, or Taiwan make you reflect on the power of the ancient tradition's influence. Seeing this kind of evocation next to those appearing in European countries that have been within the reach of Graeco-Roman culture for long centuries evinces the potential of the ancient code, which not only is still comprehensible but can even expand to include new signs.

The above volume on Antigone's European presence also includes a text about the Polish reception of the Theban myth – namely, Marc Robinson's *Declaring and Rethinking Solidarity: Antigone in Cracow*.<sup>18</sup> That text takes up Andrzej Wajda's staging of Sophocles' play at the Teatr Stary [Old Theatre] in 1984, with the famous chorus wearing dark glasses (typical of the communist leader, General Wojciech Jaruzelski) and the references to Martial Law in Poland (1981–1983). This stage production inspired the Polish rock singer Kora (that “more raucous” sound twenty years before Heaven Shall Burn's album!) to devote a song to Antigone.<sup>19</sup> It is worth mentioning that more than two decades later, in his film *Katyn* (2007), Wajda again invoked the Theban princess in the character of Agnieszka who fought alone, without support from Irena-Ismene, for the dignity of her brother, an officer murdered by the NKVD. Actually, Oedipus' daughter occupies a special place in our culture; not without reason do we speak of the “Polish Antigone” or even “Polish Antigones.”<sup>20</sup> And they do not necessarily all have to be of Polish descent, as Janusz Głowacki demonstrated in his play *Antigone in New York* (1992).

Every evocation of Antigone is different, but nevertheless all of them involve issues of identity, exclusion, and remembrance, and mythical time overlaps there with historical time and spills into the present. In a recently published (2012) study on the reception of the myth of Oedipus' daughter in the context of Nazism and the terror-ridden “Years of Lead” – “gli anni di piombo” – Sotera Fornaro uses a very apt expression: “Antigone's

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<sup>18</sup> Ibidem, pp. 201–218.

<sup>19</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Antygona...*, op. cit., pp. 112–120. I owe the information about Kora's song *Antygona* to Dr. Michał Mizera, who is researching this myth in Polish theatre.

<sup>20</sup> Plural, nota bene, as in Steiner, see n. 12. See also Dariusz Kosiński, *Sceny z życia dramatu*, Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2004.

time” (“l’ora di Antigone”).<sup>21</sup> And in fact, that time encompasses even more than a few decades of the previous century; it has lasted for twenty-five centuries, and we still keep discovering new layers of meaning in the ancient text of Sophocles’ play:

Numberless are the world’s wonders, but none  
More wonderful than man.<sup>22</sup>

These words from the chorus, which were considered a manifesto of optimism for centuries, today sound more and more disturbing. One of the first to notice this was Martin Heidegger,<sup>23</sup> who may have learned their somber message only too well.

But Antigone is also the White Rose – apparently it was the mirror of the Theban myth in which Sophie Scholl was seen by Carl Orff, author of the opera *Antigona* (1949), whose friendship with Kurt Huber, co-founder and member of the anti-fascist movement, was put to a terrible test during the war when Huber was arrested.<sup>24</sup> Orff failed the test, as did many of his contemporaries raised on the noble values of ancient culture, which was later accused of not having saved the world. “À bas le latin!” – was the cry raised in the 1960s, often very effectively, to get rid of Latin as the carrier

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<sup>21</sup> Sotera Fornaro, *L’ora di Antigone dal nazismo agli ‘anni di piombo’*, Gunter Narr Verlag, Tübingen 2012.

<sup>22</sup> Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. Dudley Fitts and Robert Fitzgerald, in Sophocles, *The Oedipus Cycle: Oedipus Rex, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone*, Harvest, New York, 1949, vv. 332–333.

<sup>23</sup> See M.GF. [Mark Griffith], entry *Antigone*, in *The Classical Tradition*, eds. Anthony Grafton, Glenn W. Most, Salvatore Settis, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA–London 2010, p. 51.

<sup>24</sup> For the controversies around Orff’s position in this matter see, e.g., Nicholas Attfield, *Re-staging the Welttheater: A Critical View of Carl Orff’s Antigona and Oedipus der Tyrann*, in *Ancient Drama in Music for the Modern Stage*, eds. Peter Brown, Suzana Ograjenšek, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2010 (pages not numbered, consulted online: Dec. 26, 2012). See also entry *Carl Orff*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl\\_Orff](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Orff) (consulted: Dec. 26, 2012). In the context of WWII see also other *Antigones* – e.g., by Jean Anouilh (1942) or Bertolt Brecht (1948); see Fornaro, op. cit.

of that culture – a culture which, it was claimed, had let everyone down in many respects.<sup>25</sup>

However, it was actually people who let down both others and themselves. Humans' wonderful power – the subject of the laudatory or perhaps rather cautionary hymn sung by Sophocles' chorus, which Scholl also read<sup>26</sup> – still places us on the verge of falling into hubris, forgetting our obligations toward the members of the community. And it is precisely the values handed down in masterpieces by the Greeks and Romans, who were aware of these things, that make us remember and help us overcome hubris. As long as we are prepared to give those masterpieces a chance to fully speak to us.



*Stolpersteine* on the anniversary of Kristallnacht,  
Berlin's quarter – Charlottenburg, Nov. 9, 2012

<sup>25</sup> See, e.g., the controversial novel by Jonathan Littell, *The Kindly Ones*, trans. Charlotte Mandell, Harper Perennial, New York et al. 2010 (first edition in French 2006).

<sup>26</sup> See Niklas Holzberg, *Antike Texte in Studium und Flugblatt: Philologischer Seminaralltag und Weiße Rose an der Universität München*, in *Antike außerhalb des Hörsaals*, ed. Kai Brodersen, Lit Verlag, Münster–Hamburg–London 2003, pp. 151–163 (the scholar in fact questions many of the stereotypes involved in interpreting references to Antiquity in the context of the White Rose organization).

After the war Orff wrote a letter to Huber – a controversial letter to a ghost, because Huber had been guillotined in 1943, and to the sound of Orff’s silence.<sup>27</sup> In opposition to the composer’s doubtful gesture, a movingly beautiful testimony of remembrance about the dead can be found in Berlin on the anniversary of Kristallnacht [Crystal Night]. In front of the buildings whose residents were deported to the death camps during the war, brass plaques – *Stolpersteine* – have been placed in the sidewalk as part of an artistic tribute initiated by the German artist Gunter Demnig.<sup>28</sup> Engraved on each plaque is the first name, surname, date of birth, and date of death of a murdered person, and the name of the camp. Each plaque represents one life. On the night of November 9–10, an extraordinary community of the living and the dead forms: the present residents of these buildings light candles at the *Stolpersteine* to honour the memory of those

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<sup>27</sup> See Martin Kettle, *Secret of the White Rose*, “The Guardian” Jan. 2, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2009/jan/02/classical-music-film-carmina-burana> (consulted: Nov. 11, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> See the project’s website <http://www.stolpersteine.com/> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013). It needs noting that this project also met with criticism: *Stolpersteine* are placed on the sidewalk, so some people interpreted this initiative as “trampling” on the memory of the victims. On the other hand, during the war these people really had been trampled upon – stripped of human dignity, something of which the project can be a symbolic reminder. The placement of these plaques, which shine in the sunlight and attract the attention of passersby, makes a strong impression – you realize what terrible tragedies unfolded in a given place several decades ago. According to the Polish version of Wikipedia, entry *Stolperstein*, <http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stolperstein> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013), similar plaques are now found in Wrocław and Stubice and are called *Stones of Remembrance* (i.e., they make us stop in the midst of our daily haste, like “stumbling stones,” which is what the German name means, to learn – a multifaceted process – the art of remembrance). Nota bene, it is interesting from the point of view of the reception of Antiquity and the Thermopylae myth (about which more will be said further on) that the press article in question in Wikipedia about the *Stolpersteine* project carries a title that paraphrases the distich by Simonides. Wikipedia quotes as a source: Marcin Kostaszuk, Marek Zaradniak, *Przechodniu, tu mieszkali sąsiedzi*, “Głos Wielkopolski” Feb. 1, 2011, p. 5. On the website of the journal the text appears as: *Wielkopolska: Żydzi chcą upamiętnić ofiary nazizmu Kamieniami Pamięci*, see <http://www.gloswielkopolski.pl/artykul/363519,wielkopolska-zydzichca-upamietnic-ofiary-nazizmu,id,t.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).



former residents, and with them – all the victims of Nazism. Flowers are also laid. Most often, these are white roses – the symbol of the “German Antigone.”<sup>29</sup> It is a long way from Sophocles’ Athenian stage in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to a boulevard in 21<sup>st</sup>-century Berlin, yet it is also very short.

So, Plato or locomotives? Reading *Antigone* or...? We should not be outraged by such questions. Instead, like Bocheński in his works, let us show appreciation for the courage of those who ask, because by posing such questions out loud they give us a chance to reply – an opportunity to start a conversation. The real danger lies in pushing the humanities to the margins without a word and without the will to carry on dialogue. The real danger lies in suppressing inconvenient things, as did Creon, to whom the law of the stronger lent a semblance of infallibility.

The failure of the ruler of Thebes is Sophocles’ warning to each and every one of us, because in various circumstances all of us make choices that in some degree destroy or consolidate the community built upon ancient culture. The fate of Antiquity is decided in our small decisions, the ones we make in our private lives, both on important anniversaries and every day.

Let us finally take pity on Creon, however, leaving him in peace, and in analyzing selected aspects of the Graeco-Roman heritage that also reveal its abundance, let us consider why this community is worth consolidating, why it is worth continuing OBTA’s mission in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Not because of the ancient tragedian’s warnings, but because of the strength we still draw from Antiquity. Therefore – cui bono?

### **Playing for a Million**

The dilemmas of young people studying seven hundred years ago were not all that different from the ones their peers face today: the right education, choosing a job, plans for the future...

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<sup>29</sup> Antigone in the context of the 20<sup>th</sup>-century fronts is mentioned also by Jacek Bocheński in the capriccio *Pół do Siódmej*, in eiusdem, *Kaprysy starszego pana*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2004, pp. 129–132.

Francesco Petrarca – Petrarch was meant to train for a “proper” profession, for the benefit of his family and himself, as everyone told him from childhood. But Petrarch wanted to be a poet, and being a poet, as we all know, can hardly be called a profession at all. During the discussions at home when they tried to get him to change his mind, a terrible incident occurred – one could even call it a crime. Petrarch recalled it years later in a letter. Very strong emotions still emerge from between the Latin words: “Be it laughable or pathetic, but before my very eyes they burned all my books by Cicero and the works of the poets,” Petrarch complained to a friend.<sup>30</sup> Seeing his son’s despair, Ser Petracco (the father) pulled two books from the flames: one by Virgil (it is never said outright, but obviously it was *The Aeneid*, as a source of consolation in life for the young man) and one by Cicero – *Rhetoric*, for the practical value it could contribute to the aspiring poet’s finally gaining a “proper” profession.<sup>31</sup>

At first it was Petrarch’s father who was suspected of burning the book collection. According to the most recent hypotheses, responsibility for the crime of libricide more likely lies with the young poet’s stepmother.<sup>32</sup> Petrarch never names the guilty party; perhaps he did not want to identify him or her for personal reasons, or maybe he felt guilty himself. The letter does suggest that Petrarch had expected such a turn of events. He hid the books that could distract him from a lucrative occupation (“lucrativo velut studio”). As it turned out, he did not hide them well enough, seeing as they were discovered and destroyed, allegedly for his own good. Many years passed, the trauma remained.

Despite a degree of compromise, Petrarch followed his own path. It might have been tougher than the one his father and stepmother had planned

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<sup>30</sup> See Petr. *Sen.* XVI 1.

<sup>31</sup> In Petrarch’s time, Cicero was believed to have written *Rhetorica ad Herennium* – the text rescued by the poet’s father. From the point of view of reception, it is this belief that is important and not the results of contemporary studies, which in this case prove that Cicero was not the author of the said treatise.

<sup>32</sup> See Michele Feo, *Petrarca e Cicerone*, in *Cicerone nella tradizione europea: dalla tarda antichità al Settecento. Atti del VI Symposium Ciceronianum Arpinas*, ed. Emanuele Narducci, Felice le Monnier, Firenze 2006, pp. 17–50.

for him, but – and here we come to a question relevant at the new OBTA and often repeated by Professor Kieniewicz – who said we should choose the easier path in our lives?

Even though Petrarch became independent and managed surprisingly well to provide for himself and his family, in many situations he still had to justify his literary vocation. Like a good lawyer should (law studies in Montpellier and Bologna), the adult Petrarch got himself a witness whose authority was (at least at that time) impossible to question: Marcus Tullius Cicero, the very same “useful” author that the Italian poet’s father approved of and saved from the pyre. Furthermore, Petrarch was lucky and himself discovered Cicero’s text that contained a vision of the world of which he could say: “It’s mine.” In discussions on profits and the utility of literature he adduced this text eagerly.<sup>33</sup> It was *Pro Archia poeta oratio* – Cicero’s oration in defense of Archias.

The trial of Archias, a Greek poet from Antioch, concerned the right to citizenship, so in a deeper sense (besides a number of very practical benefits) it concerned belonging to a certain community. Based on in-depth analyses of researchers of Roman law, we know today that Archias was not entitled to citizenship *de iure*. In Ancient Rome, however, the status *de iure* was of secondary importance and was always subject to multi-faceted social negotiations. In the case of Archias, the political background of the trial was much more important; if it were not for the poet’s connections to Roman politicians,<sup>34</sup> the trial would probably never have taken place. In fact, the aim of the attack on Archias was to hurt his protector, Lucullus.

Of course these are things of which Petrarch was probably unaware.<sup>35</sup> However, it was thanks to the complicated legal situation (Cicero was defending a cause that was lost *de iure*, but nonetheless he intended to win) and the equally complicated political context (Cicero as the lawyer

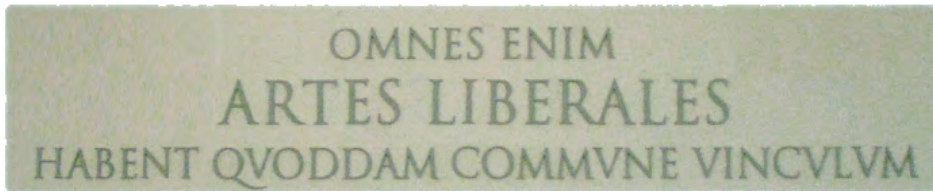
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<sup>33</sup> See Petr. *Fam.* XIII 6; *Sen.* XV 11.

<sup>34</sup> See John H. Taylor, *Political Motives in Cicero’s Defense of Archias*, “American Journal of Philology” 73 (1952), pp. 62–70.

<sup>35</sup> Again, from the point of view of Reception Studies, the important thing here is what Petrarch knew, because we are studying the perception of the ancient orator in the poet’s time and not the political circumstances in Cicero’s day.

of a protégé of Lucullus was taking the side of Pompey’s adversaries, whereas he did not intend to alienate Pompey himself), that we have an oration which is distinctly different from the others preserved in the corpus of Roman speeches. The circumstances gave Cicero the impulse to lead the judges and listeners along a path of reasoning that was extraordinary – so extraordinary that already in the introduction, the exordium, Cicero saw fit to pretend he was asking the tribunal and the auditorium for their consent to an unusual pleading.



Inscription in the Conference Room of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,”  
Nowy Świat St. 69

For Petrarch, Cicero’s line of reasoning was not unusual at all. It was natural to him ever since he had decided as a young man (insofar as talent in such cases leaves the artist any room for decision) to live by literature. The fact is that in his defense of Archias, Cicero was defending literary studies and the creation of literature as an activity important for all of society. Even if he was not entitled to citizenship, Archias as a poet – argues Cicero, and it is hard not to think he sent his audience a knowing smile – should receive it anyway, and we Romans should feel proud of such a fellow citizen, someone valuable to the whole community.

Apart from Archias’ services in commemorating the deeds of brave men (Cicero made no secret of the fact that as a brave man he, too, was counting on receiving a poem in his honour from the artist<sup>36</sup>), the attention of the oration’s audience is drawn particularly to Archias’ special role as

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<sup>36</sup> See Cic. Arch. 28 (“Nam quas res nos in consulatu nostro vobiscum simul pro salute huiusce imperi et pro vita civium proque universa re publica gessimus, attigit hic versibus atque inchoavit: quibus auditis, quod mihi magna res et iucunda visa est, hunc ad perficiendum † adortavi.”).

a teacher. Presenting himself as the man's pupil, Cicero shows by his own example that literary studies are helpful in gaining skills in other areas, including practicing law for the general good of the Republic.

Furthermore, Cicero argues, not only literature and law but all the arts that concern human beings (“omnes artes, quae ad humanitatem pertinent”) are interconnected (“habent quoddam commune vinculum”).<sup>37</sup> Petrarch, forever marked by the brand of his burning books, could not have found a better advocate.



## Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung/Foundation

Logo of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

Cicero's oration in defense of Archias was quickly included in the canon of texts of the civilization built on the Graeco-Roman tradition. Anyone going through the education process was familiar with this oration, and in fact knew it in Latin. It did not matter whether they became a clergyman in adulthood, or studied electricity, travelled the world in search of new butterfly species, or supervised railway construction. The core education was the same, in accordance with the Ciceronian idea of the connection between the arts that were ultimately placed in the framework of the trivium and quadrivium, which, by the way, significantly restricted the revolutionary – also by today's standards – vision of the Roman orator.

Even with certain limitations, however, the education process served to form a strong community rising above the borders of countries (some of which experienced periods of nonexistence on the map of the world, yet still belonged to that community!<sup>38</sup>) and disciplines. There is a reason why

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<sup>37</sup> See Cic. *Arch.* 2.

<sup>38</sup> As, for example, Poland during the time of the partitions (I Partition between Russia, Prussia, and Austria – 1772; full regaining of independence – 1918).

quite a few butterfly species from different continents have been named after mythological heroes, why Mary Shelley called Doctor Frankenstein experimenting with galvanization the “New Prometheus” (and she did not mean it as a positive epithet...), and why the Polish steam locomotive that sent everyone into rapture at the International Exposition in Paris in 1937 was called the Beautiful Helen.<sup>39</sup> Plato or locomotives? – just a few decades ago such questions simply made no sense.

By learning Latin and ancient culture, successive generations of pupils of Archias were brought up together with Cicero and Petrarch. And even though Archias was brilliant neither as a poet nor as a teacher, Cicero’s brilliance brought him to fame as the victorious hero of civilization’s judgment on literature and, more broadly, on the idea of a comprehensive education.



Cicero Street in Berlin with a (symbolic?) sign which warns that it is necessary to give way ahead

<sup>39</sup> See Katarzyna Marciniak, *Mitologia grecka i rzymska*, op. cit., p. 224 (*Piękna Helena pod parą [Beautiful Helen at Full Steam]*). Moreover, the fascinating history of the reception of ancient myths within the Polish railway system was elaborated recently by Adam Ciołek, MISH student, as a poster presentation entitled *Love of the Railway, Like Love of Mythology, Begins in Childhood: Are the Two Connected? How?*, at the international conference *Our Mythical Childhood... Classics and Children’s Literature Between East & West* (about the conference see below: *Who as a Child...*).

On November 22, 2008, viewers of the TV show *Milionerzy* (the Polish version of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*) were sitting nervously in front of their TV sets. No doubt quite a few people who were not regular viewers also joined them. Despite the title, the million-złoty question was seldom asked. To get to it, contestants had to answer fourteen previous questions of growing difficulty.

In November 2008 the million-złoty question was: “The oration in defense of the poet Archias went down in history as one of the best rhetorical performances by...,” followed by four names. Apart from Cicero, they included Isocrates, Demosthenes, and Quintilian. The contestant still had one “lifeline” left, the so-called 50/50, enabling him to eliminate two answers that were definitely wrong. He took advantage of it and Cicero and Isocrates were left on the screen. According to the rules, contestants may refuse to answer if they are unsure and thus end the game, keeping the money won so far. This was the option chosen by the man facing the million-złoty question in November 2008.<sup>40</sup>

This example from the Polish version of a game show can be viewed as a symbolic expression of the changes that have taken place in the education system over the past few decades. One of Cicero’s most famous orations, for centuries the foundation of education for generations of people, not only humanists, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century has come to be considered something so exotic that knowing it has been valued at one million zloties. Maybe it is worth learning about Antiquity after all? This question springs to mind as a slightly ironic query – just slightly because it is optimistic that the contestant in fact knew the correct answer, he just was not sure enough to risk the capital he had gained with his impressive knowledge at the competition’s earlier stages.

The moderator of the German version of *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* – the famous Günther Jauch, a man whose remarkable personality has protected him from celebrity hubris – is a supporter of classical education and quite seriously argues that knowledge of Latin and Greek enables game

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<sup>40</sup> See entry *Milionerzy*, <http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milionerzy> (consulted: Nov. 5, 2013).

show participants to answer most of the questions; even if they do not know certain facts or definitions, thanks to the classical languages you can, for example, deduce the etymology of a term and thus its meaning.

Wilfried Stroh refers to Jauch's hypothesis in *Latein ist tot, es lebe Latein!* [*Latin Is Dead, Long Live Latin!*], a book that reached the best-seller list of the opinion-making weekly "Der Spiegel" and will soon be published in Poland.<sup>41</sup> Presenting all kinds of logical arguments designed to confirm the legitimacy of teaching Latin, there comes a point when Stroh rejects them all and says that only one really counts: experiencing a masterpiece ("das Erlebnis eines Meiterwerkes").<sup>42</sup> Communing in the original with the texts of our civilization's founders – brilliant poets and writers (time usually shows no mercy toward poor ones) – we feel something extraordinary. This is something that can only be understood by someone who has experienced such contact with a classic – an experience that makes us begin to see the world differently. Furthermore, by communing with the past we are taking a step into the future, as we learn from the essay *What Is a Classic?* by Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve, T.S. Eliot's spiritual guide in his own lecture of 1944.<sup>43</sup>

The problem is that experiencing a masterpiece is not something you can describe or even explain in scholarly terms. Anyone who has not had the good fortune or opportunity to have this experience can, for the time

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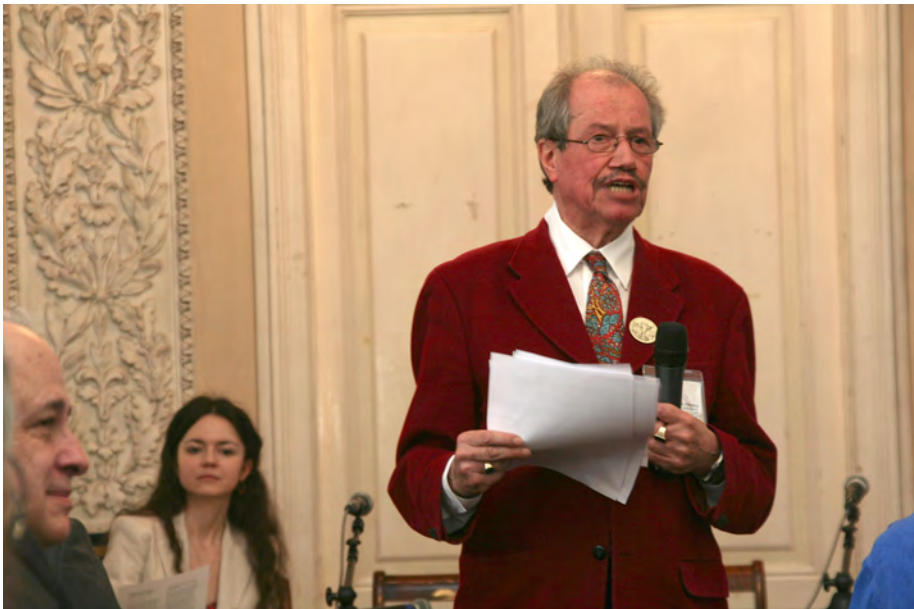
<sup>41</sup> See Wilfried Stroh, *Latein ist tot, es lebe Latein! Kleine Geschichte einer grossen Sprache*, List, Berlin 2007, p. 12. In Poland, the book will be published with an introduction by Prof. Elżbieta Wesołowska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) and in the translation by Dr. Aleksandra Arndt (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań) who added her own chapter on Polish culture.

<sup>42</sup> See Katarzyna Marciniak, *Zum Mocium Panem zu werden... Kleine Gedanken zu einem grossen Buch*, "Eos" 97 (2010), pp. 297–307.

<sup>43</sup> See Charles-Augustine Sainte-Beuve, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Classique?*, "Le Constitutionnel," Oct. 21, 1850; T.S. Eliot, *What Is a Classic? An Address Delivered before the Virgil Society on the 16<sup>th</sup> of October, 1944*, Faber & Faber, London 1945. See also Steven Shankman, *In Search of the Classic: Reconsidering the Greco-Roman Tradition, Homer to Valéry and Beyond*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park 1994; Katarzyna Marciniak, *Mitologia grecka i rzymska*, op. cit., p. 172.



being, only trust their teachers and masters that it is worth making the quite substantial effort needed to establish a relationship with an ancient author. But if such people have no one they can trust – no teachers or masters – things get complicated. The issue at stake is much broader than learning Latin, something that the new OBTA should support, of course, especially since the need for such support is particularly great today. But the issue of Latin is just one of the problems in the discussion on the contemporary vision of education. The new OBTA as part of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” should be an active participant in this discussion.



Prof. Wilfried Stroh during his lecture delivered in Latin at the opening of the conference *Our Mythical Childhood...*, UW's Ballroom, May 23, 2013

Of course Petrarch's dilemma – “proper” profession vs. poetry – was only an ostensible problem, because literature is a vocation and there is no room here for choices. Besides, manuscripts, as we well know, do not burn – moreover some considered lost can even be found in quite large numbers, as Petrarch himself discovered many times. But there remains the always relevant dilemma of how to teach – broadly or in narrow special-

izations – so that young people find fulfillment in their lives, so that their individual skills are not wasted, so that they can consciously and creatively develop them.

Defending Archias, Cicero invokes the concept of *artes liberales*. He mentions that all these arts are connected through common ties. It bears noting, though, that the word “liberalis” – “liberal” – contains the notion of freedom – liberty. What paradoxical concept speaks of ties and freedom simultaneously, and does so with regard to arts, as if everyone could create and be an artist?

This is exactly the phenomenon of *artes liberales*. Education provided according to the idea of the liberal arts – as Cicero understood them, which was a much broader approach than the medieval division into trivium and quadrivium – teaches young people to be open, independent, and versatile. This is important especially today, because – contrary to appearances – rapid civilization changes are driving not development but fossilization of the education system, in the sense that strict divisions, specializations, and education paths are being formed for the more and more necessary experts who are extremely well versed in one problem, but are often unable to communicate with experts in another, not to mention any dialogue with the wider public.

Young people educated in the spirit of *artes liberales*, i.e., learning all that is worthy of free people, gain the competence – invaluable today – to merge different disciplines and mediate in communication between experts, not belittling the important role of experts in society. Moreover, a broad outlook on the world and learning creative thinking from the greatest artists of our civilization, in a very practical sense enables students following the path of *artes liberales* not to be satisfied with existing solutions or workplaces (of which there will never be enough to go around anyway), but to create new ones that we as teachers may not even be able to imagine today.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> See Ewa Stefaniak, *Przekraczanie granic, czyli o sile i słabości współczesnej humanistyki. Rozmowa z profesorem Jerzym Axerem*, “Profundere Scientiam. Biuletyn Centrum Studiów Zaawansowanych Politechniki Warszawskiej” 5 (2011), pp. 1–4, online: [http://al.uw.edu.pl/pliki/biuletyn\\_2011\\_05.pdf](http://al.uw.edu.pl/pliki/biuletyn_2011_05.pdf) (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

OBTA, which had the courage to lead Latin to the dock and put it on trial in a situation resembling the defense of Archias,<sup>45</sup> which is a centre for meetings between people representing diverse countries, disciplines, and generations, and which is a part of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” precisely as a part of this Faculty can offer a space for discussions on and implementation of the Ciceronian vision of education. It needs emphasizing that this is a vision based on a pact of trust between teachers, students, as well as other employees of the University understood as a Community. Even in the best system, there is no way of imposing such a pact of trust, but it can be learned – from a Master. This requires the courage to open up to emotional commitment and the experiencing of a masterpiece, and to develop your skills and build your identity, which is also a part of the Community’s identity, under the guidance of masters and teachers who also learn in this process.



Plaque commemorating Prof. Tadeusz Zieliński,  
Conference Room of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Nowy Świat St. 69

At OBTA, at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales,” finally at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” as well as the Collegium MISH as an affiliated unit, the Master-Pupil relations that are disappearing in the age of mass education have always been very important. They should also be the basis for the new OBTA’s educational activities, together with

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<sup>45</sup> See [collective work], *Łacina na ławie oskarżonych. Druk z okazji Setnego Zjazdu Polskiego Towarzystwa Filologicznego*, OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2004 (book with a CD containing a transcript of the trial).

concern to make sure that ancient culture continues to have a place in curricula, as sought by the charismatic Master of our Masters, the great philologist and friend of Cicero – Tadeusz Zieliński.

The stake here is more than the million you can win in a game show thanks to comprehensive knowledge. Deciding on education according to the *artes liberales* idea, based on ancient culture, without hubris and without thinking one discipline is better than another, we are building ties and a shared identity for participants in the education process as well as teaching them freedom and the courage to question authorities – of course reading *Antigone* and studying its reception are significant here as well... This is not a comfortable path and it can inspire fear, because ultimately only true authorities will survive while apparent ones will fall. It is not an easy path, because it requires effort from all the members of the university Community. But who ever said we should choose the easy path in our lives?

### **Cicero and His Contemporaries**

“Seeing as the city gates were locked, it was almost impossible to leave the capital. Therefore many tried to hide in cesspools, in chimneys, in boxes; some of those who managed to flee the city hid in the tombs on the Via Appia. Human inventiveness truly knows no bounds in such situations.”<sup>46</sup>

Let us conduct an experiment and remove the proper noun “Via Appia” from the above excerpt from Kazimierz Kumaniecki’s unfinished novel *August* [*Augustus*]. Then, instead of a fictionalized account of Roman proscriptions we might be reading the shocking report of a Polish Home Army soldier who witnessed the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943 and later fought in the Warsaw Uprising of 1944.

Even when he was writing about Augustus, Kumaniecki was writing about Cicero. The orator died in the aforementioned proscriptions, creating a big problem for Professor Kumaniecki because how can a novel in which

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<sup>46</sup> Kazimierz Kumaniecki, *August*, manuscript edition Anna Zawalska, foreword (“*Ja, August...*” *Ostatnia rola Kazimierza Kumanieckiego* [“*I, Augustus...*” *The Last Role of Kazimierz Kumaniecki*]) by Katarzyna Marciniak, Instytut Filologii Klasycznej UW, Warszawa 2010, p. 49.

Augustus is the positive hero explain the fact that the inventor of the brave new world not only did not save Cicero (his teacher, let it be recalled), but even approved his death sentence? We will not trace here how Kumaniecki tried to overcome this difficulty. *August* is a book the Professor did not manage to finish, and in the case of unfinished books, halted by Thanatos, you need to be very careful not to hurt them with an analysis that goes too far.



Plaque commemorating Prof. Kazimierz Kumaniecki,  
Conference Room of the Faculty of "Artes Liberales," Nowy Świat St. 69

However, after reading *August* there is one observation that cannot be ignored: again, even when he was writing about Augustus, Kumaniecki was writing about Cicero, but in writing about Cicero and his contemporaries, he was looking at himself and his generation. And it was precisely by combining personal experience with academic rigor in the best sense of the *sine ira* requirement, that he became a leading Ciceronian scholar. Indeed, Cicero became the author of Kumaniecki's life, though he did not expect this when he started working at the Jagiellonian University as a Greek scholar and then transferred to the University of Warsaw as a Latinist-Horatianist. Kumaniecki's studies on Cicero were ahead of their time, and though the Professor was a scholar with achievements of importance in world research almost from the start of his work, it is only today that we seem to have matured enough to fully appreciate their worth. This is especially true for texts in which Kumaniecki shows Cicero as the author of a vision of civilization based on a culture of the word creating a

community,<sup>47</sup> with the age-old dream of intellectuals – nota bene, also set down in verse by Cicero the poet (sic!) – that words be victorious over the force of arms.<sup>48</sup>

Cicero's vision, which was also Kumaniecki's vision, and of course Petrarch's, was outlined the most fully in the Professor's book *Cyceron i jego współcześni* [*Cicero and His Contemporaries*] – an academic work of literary value being a synthesis, which is surprising because it preceded Kumaniecki's editorial and analytical studies on Marcus Tullius.<sup>49</sup> Today this book is important not only as an academic monograph, but also as a source. In it, Kumaniecki proposes reaching again for ancient culture, of which Cicero is an ambassador, and adopting it as the basis for rebuilding the identity of a generation wounded by History – the Professor's generation, which experienced the disintegration of the world and witnessed or with various degrees of activeness took part in building a new one – for themselves and future generations.

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<sup>47</sup> See, e.g., John Dugan, *Making a New Man. Ciceronian Self-Fashioning in the Rhetorical Works*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2005; Stephanie Kurczyk, *Cicero und die Inszenierung der eigenen Vergangenheit. Autobiographisches Schreiben in der späten Römischen Republik* (diss.), Böhlau Verlag, Köln–Weimar–Wien 2006; Henriette van der Blom, *Cicero's Role Models. The Political Strategy of a Newcomer*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2010; Peter White, *Cicero in Letters. Epistolary Relations of the Late Republic*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2010; Ingo Gildenhard, *Creative Eloquence. The Construction of Reality in Cicero's Speeches*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York 2011.

<sup>48</sup> In the epic *De consulatu suo*, in the verse in the variant “Cedant arma togae, concedat laurea linguae.” Today the correct version is assumed to be the lectio “laudi” in the place of “linguae,” but again, from the perspective of the reception of this verse, independently of the “philological truth,” “linguae” is more important as the lectio which impacted the culture recipients' imagination particularly strongly because of the attractive juxtaposition of “laurea”/“linguae” (and many humanists thought precisely this lectio to be authentic).

<sup>49</sup> See Kazimierz Kumaniecki, *Cyceron i jego współcześni*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1959, republished in 1989; Italian edition as *Cicerone e la crisi della repubblica romana*, Centro di Studi Ciceroniani Editore, Roma 1972. The critical edition of *De oratore* prepared by the Professor appeared in the most prestigious series Teubner ten years after the monograph – in 1969.

Kumaniecki's extremely innovative approach to Antiquity lay in the fact that he never presented ancient culture in an idealized way. He himself understood very well that it was not ideal (no culture ever is or will be) and that by presenting it as being perfect he would only put off his readers, whose sensitivity to falseness and lies had increased in Poland in the 1950s as a result of historical experiences. Hence Kumaniecki's bold decision to perform an in-depth analysis of Cicero's dialogues and correspondence and highlight his dilemmas, because these were becoming painfully comprehensible to the Professor's generation, sorely tried by World War II and the postwar changes. This was completely different from Jérôme Carcopino, who read Cicero's letters at that time from the viewpoint of the history of Vichy France, or, a little earlier, from Theodor Mommsen, who saw Cicero as a weak man – an irritating obstacle on the brilliant Caesar's path.

Analyzing the works of these scholars, we realize that even the history of research is part of the history of reception – an excellent research topic for the new OBTA<sup>50</sup> – and Cicero has served for centuries as a barometer of the ideological changes of both individuals and entire generations. He can be the object of both worship (some have even called him “Saint Tully”<sup>51</sup>) and hatred, and observing the sinusoid of emotions accompanying interpretations of his work and biography we can see phenomena related not only to the ancient world of the Greeks and Romans, but also to subsequent periods and centuries. Kumaniecki's account of the proscriptions in which Cicero lost his life is just one example of ancient history being superimposed on the present times – or maybe the other way round.

Thus, studies on Cicero surpass the boundary of a single discipline. Apart from classical scholars, these studies also welcome historians, philo-

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<sup>50</sup> See the debate which may set the direction to this kind of research, the one organized by Prof. Jan Kieniewicz *How Do We Define Our Community?* within the framework of the *Academia in Public Discourse* programme (workshop: *Poland and Russia: National Humanities in a Global Context*), held on Dec. 11, 2012, at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.”

<sup>51</sup> See Ann Vasaly in her review of Emanuele Narducci, *Cicerone e l'eloquenza romana. Retorica e progetto culturale* [Laterza, Roma-Bari 1997], “Gnomon” 71 (1999), p. 645.

sophers, and political scientists to meetings and discussions at the new OBTA, as well as a wide group of creators and recipients of culture, especially since even today – against expectations (the crisis of Antiquity!) – we are still all looking at ourselves in the mirror held by Cicero, and thanks to him we still talk about current and difficult issues. For example, Jacek Bocheński in *Trylogia rzymska* [*Roman Trilogy*] (*Boski Juliusz* [*The Divine Julius*], 1961; *Nazo poeta* [*Naso the Poet*], 1969; *Tyberiusz Cezar* [*Tiberius Caesar*], 2009) presents the Arpinate as a contemporary intellectual going through a process of political transformations while trying to preserve his ideals. On the other hand, Robert Harris in the two volumes published so far of his fictionalized biography of Cicero (*Imperium*, 2006; *Lustrum* [*Conspirata* in the US edition], 2009) recounts the phenomenon of the United States – the paradox of an empire that is a democracy at the same time and continues the idea of “Roman peace” in the form of *Pax Americana*. And Mario Farneti in his novella *Il Fondatore* [*The Founder*] (2005), outlining a controversial vision of Rome as a global power created under the enlightened leadership of Catiline who defeated the corrupt Cicero (the novella is a form of alternate history, a “uchronia”), in fact describes the problems afflicting today’s Italy and European Union.<sup>52</sup>

It is worth pointing out here that this contemporary life of Cicero’s is unfolding on a previously unheard-of scale. Thanks to new media, reception takes place also at the mass culture level. Among other things, the shift from printed books to e-books is aiding this process. Even if the impressions from such reading are different – the magic is more electronic than electrifying, the new format enables amateur creativity to develop. Publishing an e-book does not cost much, just like posting texts on the

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<sup>52</sup> Cicero’s presence in contemporary literature constitutes the subject of my research within the framework of the Mobility Plus Grant from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of Poland (the project: *Romances with Cicero. Cicero’s Afterlife and its Transformations in the Historical Fiction of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century*). I took interest into this theme while studying the modern presences of the vision of the Roman Republic, owing to the support of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.



Internet. Cicero is present in these kinds of works,<sup>53</sup> and also in the discourse on the myth of the ideal republic that he created in his writings and which today – even if we do not very often take Cicero’s works as our direct sources – is the subject of especially intensive discussions in the press, on TV and on Internet forums in the context of considering whether there really is any single best system that is worth supporting all over the world.<sup>54</sup> In these discussions Cicero becomes a spokesman for one side or the other and evokes controversy, like he did in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century when Zieliński tried to get his articles on the reception of Cicero published (and succeeded, though it took a year’s effort!) in “Vestnik Evropy,” a liberal journal whose editor refused to consider anything about the Arpinate – that ancient “favourite of conservatives.”<sup>55</sup> These articles later became the foundation for Zieliński’s monograph *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte*.

Also noteworthy is that Zieliński, like Kumaniecki later on, felt the need for closer contact with the author he was researching and had a creative approach to the texts he analyzed, for which he was sometimes criticized even though he followed the strictest academic standards. His artistic sensitivity – in fact, Zieliński was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature several times – enabled him to highlight the phenomenon, mentioned here quite often already, of creative reinterpretation of ancient culture in subsequent periods. Zieliński – again, just like Kumaniecki after him – was ahead of his times with his works, and in this context the above-mentioned monograph *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte* (first edition 1897) was of key importance.

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<sup>53</sup> See, e.g., Brandon D. Winningham, *Catiline: A Novel*, iUniverse, Inc., New York et al. 2007.

<sup>54</sup> See, e.g., Fjordman, *The Importance of Cicero in Western Thought*, “The Brussels Journal. The Voice of Conservatism in Europe,” Dec. 1, 2008, <http://www.brusselsjournal.com/node/3669> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>55</sup> See Tadeusz Zieliński, *Autobiografia. Dziennik 1939–1944*, eds. Hanna Geremek and Piotr Mitzner, Wydawnictwo DiG, Warszawa 2005, pp. 135–138. The monograph *Cicero im Wandel der Jahrhunderte* originated from Zieliński’s lecture marking the anniversary of Cicero’s birth – the audience’s most favourable reaction to the lecture inspired Zieliński to write the articles in question.

Today, when we have the works of Wolfgang Iser, Hans Robert Jauss, and Umberto Eco, we can fully realize how revolutionary it was in Zieliński's times to apply the method of studying not Cicero's impact on subsequent generations, but those generations' active participation in the reception and processing of the Ciceronian heritage. With his work on Cicero, Zieliński laid the foundation for studies on such cultural responses and, as we can see from his *Autobiography*, he was well aware of the fact, though of course he never used the actual term "Reception Studies."

Zieliński showed that Cicero was too important and complicated a figure to be judged unequivocally. It is much more sensible to look at the history of Graeco-Roman civilization, including Christianity (some Church Fathers were more fond of reading Cicero's dialogues than texts by their fellow believers...), through the reception of the writings and person of Cicero. The complexity of that reception makes research very difficult and this seems to be one of the main reasons why it has not been undertaken on such a wide scale after Zieliński,<sup>56</sup> whereas the other great ancient writers, like Homer, Virgil or Ovid, were the subject of in-depth studies on their life after life.<sup>57</sup> However, this could be a task for the new OBTA – a task for a team effort, an international and interdisciplinary project. A team of this kind would begin its work where Zieliński left off, i.e., from reception in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, moving toward our own times.

The new OBTA could consider studies on the reception of Cicero to be its mission also due to the special traditions of the Polish Ciceronian school. Largely dependent on the splendid achievements of the German

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<sup>56</sup> Zieliński's monograph is still quoted by Ciceronian scholars all over the world and it remains the most in-depth elaboration of Cicero's reception in culture.

<sup>57</sup> See e.g., Theodore Ziolkowski, *Virgil and the Moderns*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1993; idem, *Ovid and the Moderns*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 2005; *Homer in the Twentieth Century: Between World Literature and the Western Canon*, eds. Barbara Graziosi, Emily Greenwood, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007. Of course the studies on these authors pose many challenges for scholars as well. As far as Central Europe is concerned, it may be shown on the example of Michał Kucharski's recent project: *Ovid in Polish Culture after 1945* – a precious undertaking, to be considered within the new OBTA's plans (see also *Glosses*, p. 193, in the present volume).

school, which was marked by Caesarean scholar Mommsen,<sup>58</sup> it created its own original pro-Ciceronian community interested in interpreting Cicero's dilemmas in various contexts of reception and sensitive to his role as a spokesman for republican liberties in the specific environment of Central-European. After Zieliński, who felt at home within German academic milieu (he even wrote his famous monograph in German), studies on Cicero were continued, for example, by the eminent Polish classicist Kazimierz Morawski, a student of Mommsen himself.<sup>59</sup> These were always studies whose intention was pro, not contra, in the sense of being open to understanding the Arpinate's dilemmas, which gave philologists a filter through which they could better understand their own difficult time.

Thus, not only the artistic sensitivity of scholars is important to understand scholarly reception – Mommsen certainly possessed it (he even received a Nobel Prize in literature for his academic output) – but so are historical experiences resulting in a specific way of interpreting a classic. The lives of Polish Ciceronian scholars also prove that you can belong to the world of “universal” research and with no sense of inferiority preserve the identity of a region “to the East of History.”<sup>60</sup>

Studies on the reception of Cicero involve another important idea which, in my opinion, is key for the new OBTA: preserving the memory of the Masters. It is not without reason that the old OBTA and the current Faculty of “Artes Liberales” has a place of honour for plaques commemorating Zieliński and Kumaniecki.<sup>61</sup> Apart from strictly philological achievements and reminding us that the history of scholarship is also part of the history of reception, Polish Ciceronian studies show that simple human remembrance is important as well, enabling us to create identity, develop a system of values, and become part of a community that has been built over millen-

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<sup>58</sup> Of course we must not give in to stereotypical generalizations. The German Ciceronian school also includes great admirers of Cicero like Karl Büchner, Michael von Albrecht, and the already mentioned Wilfried Stroh.

<sup>59</sup> Mommsen also praised highly Zieliński's dissertation, closing his studies in Leipzig.

<sup>60</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Aleksander Puszkina zginął pod Filippi*, “Rocznik Towarzystwa Literackiego im. A. Mickiewicza” 32 (1997), p. 132.

<sup>61</sup> See pp. 234 and 236.

nia. What does this phenomenon involve? All we need is to observe our own Masters, and what we see will require no explanation in the form of footnotes or academic commentary.

When Professor Axer was preparing a text about Kumaniecki for publication recently, it turned out a photo was needed. In the midst of daily business and duties, documents in need of urgent signing and forms to fill in without which it is impossible to work these days, thirty-five years after his Master's death Professor Axer carefully searched through pictures and considered which photo would best express Kumaniecki's personality in this kind of publication, but most of all he sought one which Kumaniecki would have liked the most...



Prof. Kazimierz Kumaniecki

### Who as a Child...

Children in mythology are a rather thankless topic of study. Astyanax died thrown against the walls of Troy, Medea's sons were murdered by their mother, Melicertes and Learchos – by both parents in the throes of Dionysian insanity, the death of the Niobids was punishment for the hubris of their mother, the sons of Thyestes met with such a terrible fate that Helios the sun god covered his face even though he had seen many a thing... Helle was the victim of flying on a golden-fleeced ram, Polydorus lost his life because of Polymestor's greed... Even the single “hero with a happy ending”<sup>62</sup> – Perseus – cannot have had fond memories of his first contact with the world, since the world of the little Perseus was a windowless bronze cell from which he and his mother were cast into the sea in a wooden chest by his grandfather, Acrisius.

Issues of childhood in Antiquity place a great many challenges before researchers, not only because they have to deal with the traumatic experiences of “mythological” children. Childhood is a recent object of interest for adults. It is still largely a terra incognita of research, not narrowing the research field to Classical Antiquity.<sup>63</sup>

It might seem shocking and unnatural from the viewpoint of 21<sup>st</sup>-century people from Mediterranean civilization, but not so long ago children were not any special focus of attention, and obviously neither were they treated as a literary audience in their own right.<sup>64</sup> From the perspective of Classical Reception Studies in the context of childhood as a problem, the role of and attitude toward children is, however, of secondary importance. The issue that comes to the fore – an extraordinary and thought-provoking trend that has probably not been clearly noted in academic discussion – is that as the idea of a canon and classical education wanes, we are observing

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<sup>62</sup> See entry *Perseus* at Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perseus> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>63</sup> See *Children's Literature Studies: A Research Handbook*, eds. Matthew O. Grenby, Kimberley Reynolds, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke–New York 2011.

<sup>64</sup> The beginnings of children's literature are dated to the 1740s, see Carolyn L. Burke, Joby G. Copenhaver, *Animals as People in Children's Literature*, “Language Arts” 81 (2004), p. 208.

the intensifying development of children's literature that draws inspiration from Classical Antiquity.



Matylda Tracewska, *Our Mythical Childhood...* (2012), painting created by the artist especially for OBTA's research project

Studies on this phenomenon and analyzing references to ancient culture in literature for children and young adults are important to the new OBTA for two reasons. First of all, there are the mechanisms of reception mentioned many times earlier: observing the changing image of Graeco-Roman culture in literature for youngsters we gain a new, original perspective on the changes occurring in the mentality of adults (because they are the writers and they – as parents, guardians, or teachers – decide about this literature's circulation).

Secondly, there is the formative role of children's literature: it is a tool for upbringing and grassroots education. It is in childhood that the effects

of an “Antiquity injection”<sup>65</sup> can be the strongest and the most lasting. It was not without reason that Polish classical philologists, to mention Jan Parandowski – present in the memory of so many generations – or Anna M. Komornicka,<sup>66</sup> considered it their mission to write for children. Of course, they had an excellent Master in this field: Zieliński also wrote texts with young readers in mind. Moreover, the importance that he attached to this kind of writing for forming the identity of children in Poland is proved by the fact that though he initially wrote in Russian, his first language (next to German) when he arrived in Warsaw from Saint Petersburg in the meaningful year 1920,<sup>67</sup> he personally took care of supervising the Polish translation of his *Irezyona. Klechdy attyckie* [*Eiresione. Attic Tales*] (1922),<sup>68</sup> and later also *Starożytność bajeczna* [*Fabulous Antiquity*] (1930), a book he wrote especially for teenagers that opened his *Świat antyczny* [*Ancient World*] tetralogy.

Of course Antiquity is present in books by writers who are not involved in academic activity, too – for example, many Polish readers are sure to

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<sup>65</sup> I use here the term “Antiquity injection” which was coined and applied by Bocheński when he was writing about the work of the Polish classicist poet Zbigniew Herbert (1924–1998), see Jacek Bocheński, *Z Herbertem w labiryntach*, in eiusdem, *Antyk po antyku*, op. cit., pp. 81–115 (first published in “Gazeta Wyborcza” March, 3–4, 2001).

<sup>66</sup> See Jan Parandowski, *Mitologia. Wierzenia i podania Greków i Rzymian*, Altenberg, Lwów 1924; idem, *Wojna trojańska*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Książek Szkolnych, Lwów 1927; idem, *Przygody Odyseusza*, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Książek Szkolnych, Lwów 1935; Anna M. Komornicka, *Stłuczona czara*, Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warszawa 1975; eadem, *Historie nie z tej ziemi*, Wydawnictwa Radia i Telewizji, Warszawa 1987; eadem, *Niś Ariadny, czyli po nitce do kłębka*, Wydawnictwa Radia i Telewizji, Warszawa 1989; eadem, *Alfa i Omega, czyli starożytność w miniaturze*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Ostoja, Warszawa 1995.

<sup>67</sup> The year of the Battle of Warsaw in the Polish-Bolshevik War, considered one of the battles that changed world history (it stopped the Bolshevik invasion of Europe).

<sup>68</sup> A Polish-English-Russian edition of the *Attic Tales* is planned by Dr. Michał Mizera and Dr. Elżbieta Olechowska – a precious project within the research plans of the new OBTA. See also Tadeusz Zieliński, *Queen of the Wind Maidens. Prologue*, introduction Michał Mizera, translation from the Russian original Katarzyna Tomaszuk, English translation and textual notes Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” UW, Warsaw 2013, online: <http://www.omc.al.uw.edu.pl/results> (consulted: Nov. 25, 2013).

remember the excitement of going through *Uczniowie Spartakusa* [*The Disciples of Spartacus*] (1951) by Halina Rudnicka (for many years, even after 1989, required school reading – as children we were unaware of certain “socialist realist” contexts in this novel<sup>69</sup>).

References to ancient culture can even be found in the famous Polish comic book series *Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek* of Papić Chmiel. And bookstores and libraries unexpectedly (remember – this is a crisis of Antiquity!) display successive new works of Polish literature, the authors of which draw on Graeco-Roman tradition.<sup>70</sup> Moreover, publishers promptly release Polish translations of foreign bestsellers in which we find lots of inspiration taken from ancient culture. And these are not just the famous spells à la lingua Latina, Latin “speaking” names, and mythological beasts and motifs from the *Harry Potter* books (1997–2007) of J.K. Rowling. In Rick Riordan’s five-volume (plus *The Demigod Files*) series *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* (2005–2009) we meet a boy called Percy Jackson (his name being the writer’s intentional reference to Perseus as the only, as mentioned earlier, “hero with a happy ending”<sup>71</sup>) who suffers from ADHD. It quickly turns out, however, that the diagnosis is wrong, because Percy is “simply” a demigod, the son of Poseidon himself.<sup>72</sup> Evocations of ancient myths also help build the fascinating world of the *Inkheart* trilogy (2003–2007) by German writer Cornelia Funke. And when the child readers of these

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<sup>69</sup> Of course contexts do not affect good literature, which is universal, just like *Uczniowie Spartakusa* – the novel was placed on the Hans Christian Andersen Honour List (today IBBY Honour List). The studies on this novel are being carried out within the framework of the project *Our Mythical Childhood...*, by Joanna Kłos, a laureate of the Diamond Grant programme of the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education and a doctoral student of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.”

<sup>70</sup> A hopefully substantial list of Polish literature for children and young adults inspired by the ancient tradition was prepared in the framework of the project *Our Mythical Childhood...*, described further on, as a task performed by students under our supervision (see also n. 81).

<sup>71</sup> See n. 62.

<sup>72</sup> Encouraged by the success of Percy’s adventures, Riordan wrote a next cycle – *The Heroes of Olympus* (2010–2013; the publication of the final, fifth volume is scheduled for October 2014).



books grow older (leaving aside the issue of grown-up readers of children's literature...), as young adults they will immediately be able to move on to Antiquity-inspired youth literature, such as *The Hunger Games* trilogy (2008–2010) by Suzanne Collins based on the Theseus myth and gladiators' fights, or the trilogy *Starcrossed* (2011–2013) by Josephine Angelini based on Homer's epic poems,<sup>73</sup> pitched (without irony) as "Percy Jackson for teenage girls."<sup>74</sup> Older teenagers who know English, because this particular text has not been translated yet, are also likely to enjoy *Antigone*, a comic book by David Hopkins and Tom Kurzanski (2006), with its original interpretation of the fate of the protagonist and her dysfunctional family who spend their time in front of the TV or aiming guns at one another.<sup>75</sup>

*Antigone's* family may well be dysfunctional, and not only in this American comic book, which is affected by the discussion on the consequences of universal access to guns (in reality, also among teenagers). But it is exactly thanks to the myth of the Theban princess, and thanks to the other myths and references to Classical Antiquity processed in children's and youth literature, that a bond of shared associations and experiences is formed between its readers – the foundation of a community is built. This is also a kind of shared initiation, which – paradoxically – is different for different generations and at the same time identical for all: for

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<sup>73</sup> In Poland the cycle was published under the not-so-appealing title *Tied Up by the Gods* (2011–2013). However, it is worth noting the interesting – and probably very attractive, at least to the fans of the *Twilight* trilogy – advertisement on the Polish publisher's website: "A new global trend in youth literature! Next to vampires, angels, and demons, it's time for Greek mythology" (<http://wydawnictwoamber.pl/ksiazka/1110/sp%C4%99tani-przez-bog%C3%B3w>, consulted: Nov. 6, 2013). To call the presence of mythological threads in literature "a new trend" is a clear testimony to the power and up-to-day character of ancient culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

<sup>74</sup> See Rachel Deahl, *Harper Teen Pays Seven Figures for Debut YA Trilogy*, "Publishers Weekly," March 5, 2010, <http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/book-deals/article/42335-harper-teen-pays-seven-figures-for-debut-ya-trilogy.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013) and entry *Starcrossed (novel)*, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starcrossed\\_\(novel\)#cite\\_note-PW-5](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Starcrossed_(novel)#cite_note-PW-5) (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>75</sup> The authors made the comic book freely accessible at: <http://thatdavidhopkins.com/2012/03/30/antigone-for-all/> (consulted: Dec. 25, 2012).

each generation has its own vision of Antiquity, while Antiquity as a base maintains its universalism. I think this is shown brilliantly and clearly, though symbolically, in a piece by a slightly older young man from a time when people started looking at childhood with genuine interest for the first time – namely, in *Ode to Youth* by the bard of Polish Romanticism Adam Mickiewicz: “Who, as a child, detached foul Hydra’s head, / In Youth, shall strangle Centaurs even.”<sup>76</sup> This “rebellious” manifesto of a new generation is woven from references to ancient culture, and we should not treat the information that Mickiewicz’s child in the cradle dealt with the Hydra and not serpents as a factual error. Each successive hero has the right to his own CV, though if he wants to be a true hero he has to embed it in Hercules’ myth. Thanks to this kind of function of Antiquity, dialogue between generations is possible; sometimes it can be stormy, like that between the Classicists and Romantics, but being stormy is never a defect of dialogue.



### **Loeb Classical Library Foundation**

Logo of the Loeb Classical Library Foundation,  
which supported the *Our Mythical Childhood...* project

Studies on the formative role of Classical Antiquity in children’s literature began only quite recently and mainly concern English-language books.<sup>77</sup> At OBTA, we have just proposed a unique, regional perspective

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<sup>76</sup> Trans. Jarek Zawadzki, in *A Few Masterpieces of Polish Poetry*, Shenzhen 2007, e-book: <http://tlumacz-literatury.pl/polishpoetryfree.pdf> (consulted: Nov. 15, 2013), p. 51.

<sup>77</sup> In 2009 at the University of Wales, Lampeter, the conference entitled *Asterisks and Obelisks: Classical Receptions in Children’s Literature* took place, organized by Prof. Helen Lovatt and Dr. Owen Hodkinson. For the conference report see: Helen Lovatt, *Asterisks and Obelisks: Classical Receptions in Children’s Literature*, “International Journal of the Classical Tradition” 16 (2009), pp. 508–522. In April 2013 the issues regarding children’s literature in the context of Classical Reception Studies were included into some panels during the Annual Conference of the Classical Association (University of Reading).

for research into this problem, taking into consideration literatures written in national languages, believing that regions are not a periphery, but a unique context for interpreting Antiquity.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, observing the divergences between different regions and things they have in common, we can obtain a picture of the political, social, and cultural transformations that have occurred there over the centuries.

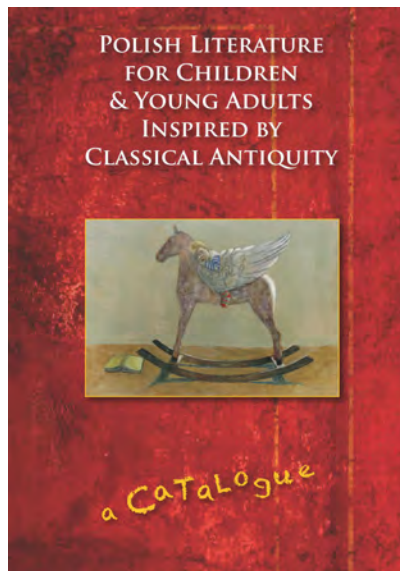
The originality of this perspective has been appreciated by the Loeb Classical Library Foundation (LCLF), one of the most important institutions supporting studies on Classical Antiquity around the world, affiliated with Harvard University. Thanks to a grant from the LCLF and to support from the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation (FIAL) and my home Faculty, we are working on a project focused precisely on such a regional perspective – *Our Mythical Childhood... Classics and Children’s Literature Between East & West*.<sup>79</sup> Initially planned on a modest scale

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<sup>78</sup> In this context, it will be worth expanding the project to study the role of translations as well – the direction suggested by Dr. Elżbieta Olechowska. Indeed, some books that are formative in English-speaking cultures have also left a mark on childhood in other countries. The *Harry Potter* series is an obvious example, but others worth mentioning include *Tanglewood Tales* (1853) by American writer Nathaniel Hawthorne. The book is of unflagging popularity in Poland and it has had many editions, including even audiobooks released, read by famous Polish actors like Krzysztof Tyniec.

<sup>79</sup> For the period 2012–2013 I received from the LCLF a grant for the project *Our Mythical Childhood...*, which in my opinion is the first bigger stage in research into this issue with a serious potential for the future. I carried out the project in collaboration with Dr. Elżbieta Olechowska, who combines Classical Philology with Media Studies, and with Joanna Kłos and Michał Kucharski, doctoral students and research secretaries for this enterprise, and with a team of scholars representing sundry disciplines and regions of the world. For more information see the project’s website: [www.omc.al.uw.edu.pl](http://www.omc.al.uw.edu.pl) (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013) and Katarzyna Marciniak, *In the Mirror of Antiquity*, “Academia. The Magazine of the Polish Academy of Sciences” 4/12/36 (2012), pp. 36–39, Polish version online: [http://www.portalwiedzy.pan.pl/images/stories/academia\\_2012/42012/36-39\\_marciniak.pdf](http://www.portalwiedzy.pan.pl/images/stories/academia_2012/42012/36-39_marciniak.pdf) (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013). I would like to thank both institutions – LCLF and FIAL, and also my home Faculty – for the support given to my project, and Prof. Krystyna Bartol from the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Prof. Mark O’Connor from Boston College, USA, and Prof. Bernd Seidensticker from the Free University in Berlin for the project’s recommendations.

as a comparative study on the experiences of the former Eastern Bloc countries and those on the truly democratic side of the Iron Curtain, the project has expanded substantially in what was an almost natural way – it became necessary to take into account not only the experience of Europe and the United States, but also Africa, Asia, Australia and New Zealand. It also turned out that due to its experience and “geo-historical” location, OBTA can serve precisely as the centre and a space that is in a sense neutral, where the project’s participants, having very different contacts with History behind them, are willing to meet.



Cover of the publication *Polish Literature for Children & Young Adults Inspired by Classical Antiquity. A Catalogue* (2013)

Such meetings are multigenerational, since the project involves not only researchers at different stages of their academic paths but also students. The latter have been offered a specific, important, and previously not undertaken task. As I started writing this text, we were working on a catalogue of references to Classical Antiquity in Polish literature for youngsters. In this work – and it was a voluntary task – more than thirty enthusiastic and committed students from all three levels of study took part.

We were experimenting, trying to build something new – with incertitude, but also with hope. Delivering the present paper for publication (October 2013), I may state that we managed to prepare the catalogue on time, i.e., for the debates of the research team in May 2013, under the Honorary Patronage of the Spouse of the Republic of Poland Anna Komorowska, organized at our Faculty as the milestone at the present stage of the *Our Mythical Childhood...* project. We created the first such database – *Polish Literature for Children & Young Adults Inspired by Classical Antiquity. A Catalogue*;<sup>80</sup> we made it also freely accessible in Internet, according to our idea to open the results of our research – as far as it is possible – to all interested culture recipients.<sup>81</sup> We are very proud of our students: our joint work was a source of sheer joy to us.

The evaluation of its results is the role of the reader, but we believe that the road itself to building this catalogue made sense, regardless of where it ultimately took us. In my view, close cooperation between researchers and students and the possibility of student participation in research projects is a key element of OBTA's multifarious activities.

Another perspective of the new OBTA is openness to sundry disciplines. The project *Our Mythical Childhood...* brings together researchers from the fields of the classics, modern philologies, archaeology, linguistics, cultural studies, philosophy, and psychology. However, we are not shutting ourselves up inside the Humanities in a conservative sense. Paradoxically, to get liberated from traditional interpretations, you sometimes have to go back to the roots, and actually draw on the ancient tradition – in this case, the Latin etymology of the term “humanities.” It encompasses everything that concerns humans, therefore also all of Cicero's *artes liberales*. From this perspective, I think the project *Our Mythical Childhood...* is a symbolic signpost for the new OBTA. Studying a topic familiar to every person, we

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<sup>80</sup> The catalogue lists texts of Polish literature but we decided to prepare it in English, which allows the texts to be popularized internationally as well. We will try also to update the catalogue in future.

<sup>81</sup> See [http://www.al.uw.edu.pl/omc\\_catalogue](http://www.al.uw.edu.pl/omc_catalogue) (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013). That is why also the present volume – along with traditional book publication – appears online as well.

are opening up to all academic milieux and also to recipients of culture without any ties to university centres: from the youngest readers, through their parents and guardians, to teachers and cultural animators who run web portals or popularize the arts in other ways.<sup>82</sup>



The University as a Community: scholars and students sum up their participation in the project *Our Mythical Childhood...*, Reading Room of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” 2013

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<sup>82</sup> The cultural patronage over the project was assumed by the Foundation ABCXXI – *All of Poland Reads to Kids*, Polish Radio Channel 2, and the web portal Qiturka.pl. At the culmination of the debates, on May 26, 2013, we organized a discussion panel on the role of books inspired by Classical Antiquity, with participants from different milieux. We were honoured also by the presence of the authors: Jacek Bocheński, Grzegorz Kasdepke, Franciszek Kobryńczuk, Barbara Ludwiczak, Eliza Piotrowska, Monika Rekowski. Barbara Strycharczyk along with her colleagues from the School Unit “Strumienie” presented the results of a year-long programme of teaching ancient culture at various levels, that might become a model in school education, as the teachers had managed to encourage the pupils also to creative artistic expression.

And it is dialogue with people representing the arts that constitutes the next key element of this project. *Artes liberales* – in Cicero’s broad understanding of the term – also include artistic activity. The Arpinate himself was a great artist of the Word, as we know from reading what he wrote, but also, as we can guess from analyzing sources, a great artist of gesture, voice, and performance, which is what an oration before an audience really was in Antiquity.



Agnieszka Kuglasz, *The Torment of Tantalus* – an artwork from the exhibition *Myth Actually!*, prepared by Prof. Zygmunt Januszewski’s Illustration Studio from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, for the conference *Our Mythical Childhood...*, Faculty of “*Artes Liberales*,” White Villa, Dobra St. 72, May 26, 2013

In the case of the project *Our Mythical Childhood...*, given that words and pictures are mutually complementary in children’s literature, apart from the natural invitation extended to writers and translators, we also greatly value our collaboration with the Illustration Studio of Professor Zygmunt Januszewski from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, deceased

in September 2013.<sup>83</sup> Professor Januszewski, though already gravely ill, engaged in the project and together with his students, they prepared an art exhibition inspired by classical mythology – *Myths Actually!*, which met with such interest on the part of scholars, that it was invited by our collaborators to another conference on the reception of Antiquity at the University of Ljubljana.<sup>84</sup> That is the best proof to the need of a broad approach to ancient culture – the object of our research, living around us and only changing forms, as in Ovidian poetry.

I am convinced that it is precisely from this broad perspective, exceeding boundaries, typified by the division into disciplines and circles, that the new OBTA will be able to develop research on childhood issues in the context of the reception of ancient culture. In the next stage, I would envisage studies on initiation through culture, extending existing material in the form of literary texts and pictures to include the other visual and audiovisual arts,<sup>85</sup> music, and new media, along with computer games<sup>86</sup> and all kinds of Internet phenomena, like YouTube and fanfiction.<sup>87</sup> This

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<sup>83</sup> Here I would also like to thank Matylda Tracewska – the young Polish artist, appreciated already in many countries, who specially for our project prepared a painting which symbolically shows the idea of the entire venture; see p. 245 and the project's website at: <http://www.omc.al.uw.edu.pl> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>84</sup> See the gallery with chosen works on the website of the project *Classics & Class. Teaching Greek and Latin behind the Iron Curtain*, coordinated by Dr. Elżbieta Olechowska and Dr. David Movrin: <http://www.classics.si/gallery/> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>85</sup> Nota bene, all of the above-mentioned novels for young adults have been or are being adapted for the screen (in parts or in full).

<sup>86</sup> For very good elaboration of the presence of Classical Antiquity in computer games see the theses by Sylwia Chmielewska, now a doctoral student of the Faculty of "Artes Liberales," a graduate of Mediterranean Civilization: *Reinterpretations of Greek Myths in Popular Culture Exemplified by Chosen Computer and Console Games* (BA thesis, 2011) and *Modern Reception of Ancient Greek & Roman History and Culture as Exemplified in Selected Strategy Computer Games* (MA thesis, 2013); see also *Glosses*, p. 202, in the present volume.

<sup>87</sup> I have recently made a reconnaissance of the fanfiction phenomenon as part of the project *Our Mythical Childhood...* The results will be published in a collection of studies, currently being prepared for print.



kind of research also invokes the tradition of the University as a Community – Universitas – of all those who want to obtain knowledge and learn about the world with the curiosity and openness that are also typical of childhood.

### **The Third Commandment of Triptolemus**

Reading different versions of mythology, we can find a scene we watch from the viewpoint of the objective narrator. Thanks to this we know that what is happening only looks dangerous. We know that when she lays her charge Triptolemus in the fire, the goddess Demeter controls the element that is meant to burn away the boy's human, mortal spirit to enable him to enter the world of the gods. Reception of this scene changes dramatically, however, if we assume the perspective of Metaneira – the mother awakened by the commotion coming from her son's chamber. She gets up, cautiously looks inside and sees her child in the middle of the hearth, among the fiery flames. Her scream of terror and protest – a primordial expression of the ties binding Metaneira to her son – breaks the bond the boy has set up with Demeter and destroys his chances for immortality.

Metaneira was not to know that the one she had taken in to nurse her child was a goddess deep in despair over the loss of her own child, her daughter Kore who was abducted by Hades to be his queen and also queen of the dead that he ruled over. Triptolemus was never in any danger – except for the danger of losing his humanity, which is a topic for reflection in a separate study in the future, perhaps also within the new OBTA. In the meantime, the important thing is that Demeter did not forget about the boy. She may have realized that by wanting to “win him over” to her side, the side of the gods, she did not truly want to offer him the gift of eternal life, but rather was trying to assuage her own longing for Kore, but this is the kind of longing that cannot be assuaged and you can hurt someone else while trying. Though she left Metaneira's palace, the goddess of fertility and growth whose grief and joy determined the rhythm of nature decided to continue to support Triptolemus to prevent him from becoming a victim of her pain. It also turned out that Metaneira's cry did not sever the bond

completely, for Demeter had already grown to love the boy like a mother.

Thanks to his unique childhood experience and the goddess's support, Triptolemus grew up to be a man who changed the world – he is our benefactor to this day. Having been taught the art of growing grain and baking bread by Demeter, Triptolemus travelled the world and shared his knowledge with all people. He also appealed to them to follow three principles we might call the “Commandments of Triptolemus.” The first two commandments reflected his existence on the border of the divine and human worlds: “Honour the gods. Respect your parents” – they voiced. Right after them, Triptolemus added a third and rather unexpected commandment, so revolutionary that it was not until our times that we matured enough (maturity and adulthood are two different things in this context) to start practicing it in our lives and legislation as something obvious: “Do not harm the animals.”



Cover of the volume *Birthday Beasts' Book. Where Human Roads Cross Animal Trails...* (2011)

It is thought-provoking that this principle was put forward by Triptolemus – the only mythological character who had such an unusual childhood with two mothers, Metaneira the mortal and Demeter the goddess controlling the cycle of nature. Whether the fire managed to burn away the human cruelty in the boy and make him sensitive to the fate of animals, we do not know. Childhood and animal themes, however, seem to come together in many ways, among other reasons because both issues were absent from research for a long time. Recently, on the other hand, we have been seeing an intensive and almost parallel development of studies on the place and role of children, and studies on the significance of animals in culture over the centuries. Precisely this kind of research on animals as our “brothers and sisters in creation” could be another challenge for the new OBTA as a part of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales.”

Today we know that animals, too, belong to the community based on the ancient tradition. Setting aside the matter of individual experiences in contacts with them (like contact with a masterpiece, this experience is hard to translate into human language – you simply have to experience it in order to understand<sup>88</sup>), animals also build our identity. Observing the changing attitude of humans toward non-humans,<sup>89</sup> as if in a mirror we can see the transformations that civilization has gone and is going through. In this,

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<sup>88</sup> Nota bene, Bocheński compares ancient authors to endangered species of animals, see his essay *Noster* in Jacek Bocheński, *Antyk po antyku*, op. cit., pp. 54–65 (this is the text of the opening lecture Bocheński gave at the 100<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Convention of the Polish Philological Society in 2004, dedicated to the work and personage of Ovid, hidden under the term *Noster*; the conference materials were published in *Owidiusz – twórczość, recepcja, legenda. Referaty wygłoszone podczas międzynarodowej konferencji z okazji Setnego Jubileuszowego Zjazdu PTF. Warszawa 16–18 września 2004*, eds. Barbara Milewska-Ważbińska, Juliusz Domański, PTF, Koło Warszawskie–IFK UW–OBTA UW, Warszawa 2006).

<sup>89</sup> The Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (also as the structure before the transformation into the Faculty) has already gained certain experience in the dialogue with animals and other non-humans, see nn. 93 and 110, and the volume: *Birthday Beasts’ Book. Where Human Roads Cross Animal Trails... Cultural Studies in Honour of Jerzy Axer*, ed. Katarzyna Marciniak, Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” – Wydawnictwo “Wilczyńska,” Warsaw 2011 (see also at <http://www.bbb.al.uw.edu.pl>, consulted: Oct. 15, 2013).

the ancient context is especially important, for two reasons. First of all, it enables us to take into account animals that probably (?) do not exist – including creatures like the Minotaur or Medusa; the way we treat them even though they (probably) do not exist is a barometer of our sensitivity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Minotaur, for example, inspires fear and disgust less and less often today, and more often – pity for its loneliness and the deformity that was not its fault.<sup>90</sup> Secondly, Classical Antiquity in research into animal issues is important as an extremely significant point of reference for all subsequent studies and analyses. This was the time when the famous definition emerged of humans as beings that speak, in opposition to animals that do not have the power of speech. The echoes of that definition, proposed in Greek by Aristotle and repeated in Latin by Cicero,<sup>91</sup> resound in many later concepts that have shaped our world, to mention only the most well-known motif of animals as machines in Cartesian philosophy, which also invokes the idea of another ancient philosopher – Seneca the Younger, who considered animals to be mute tools (as opposed to speaking tools, i.e., slaves).<sup>92</sup>

The ontological border humans-animals seems obvious, but more in-depth studies on animals in Antiquity show that these issues are much more complicated than it results from the definitions that bring an apparent order to the world, but are often repeated without deeper reflection. Proof of this is found, for example, in Cicero's sensitivity to nature, including his unquestionable ornithological passion or his criticism of practices that stripped animals of their dignity and had them killed during circus games. An analysis of literary topoi in which ancient authors refer to the world of nature and accounts of the ties found between humans and animals in

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<sup>90</sup> See, e.g., Jorge Luis Borges' short story *La casa de Asterión* [*The House of Asterion*] (1947) or Zbigniew Herbert's composition *Historia Minotaura* [*The History of the Minotaur*] (1998). See also the contemporary opera *The Minotaur* by Harrison Birtwistle with the libretto by David Harsent, <http://www.roh.org.uk/productions/the-minotaur-by-stephen-langridge> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>91</sup> See, e.g., *Ar. Pol.* 1253a; *Cic. off.* 1.16.50.

<sup>92</sup> See *Sen. Ep.* 47.19. Earlier, greater sensitivity had been shown by Varro, who classified slaves as speaking tools, household implements (e.g. carts) as mute tools, while giving beasts the status of "semi-speaking" (*semivocale*) tools, see Varro, *Rust.* 1.17.

Antiquity, and even of speaking beasts, encourages further research. The efforts of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” to launch an interdisciplinary Animal Studies programme in Poland<sup>93</sup> should continue with the support of the new OBTA, whose contribution would be to develop Classical Animal Studies, significantly expanding the contemporary (sic!) research perspective.

### Myths – Reloaded

The gods came down from Olympus in the Hellenistic period, as noted by a leading researcher of those (and other) times, Professor Anna Świderkówna. Of course, they had often visited the Earth before, but these were occasional visits and as such they ceased to satisfy human needs, writes Świderkówna. She is referring to the change in the mentality of the Greeks (and peoples within their sphere of influence) after the conquests of Alexander the Great. A new mentality was born in a new world – a world where “people more seldom seek the gods of their faith on Olympus. They now need a deity that is closer to them, with which they could establish a direct and fully personal relationship in their own earthly lives, a relationship of mutual love.”<sup>94</sup> Thus, the gods not so much stepped down as were pulled down from Olympus by people who needed them “here and now.”

The ancient gods descended to Earth in a similar sense quite recently. At least since the start of the new century (and new millennium), we have been living in a period we might call, in a certain sense, neo-Hellenistic. Even though the Graeco-Roman tradition lost its dominant position,

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<sup>93</sup> In October 2012 an interesting conference *The Experience of Animality in Culture, Science & Daily Life* was organized by Prof. Jerzy Axer and Prof. Szymon Wróbel. For March 2014 is scheduled the conference *Animals and Their People* of the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences in collaboration with the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” organized by Dr. Anna Barcz and Dorota Łagodzka (for more information see <http://animalstudies.ibl.waw.pl/pl/miedzynarodowa-konferencja-naukowa-zwierzeta-i-ich-ludzie>, consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>94</sup> Anna Świderkówna, *Bogowie zesli z Olimpu. Bóstwo i mit w greckiej literaturze świata hellenistycznego*, Wiedza Powszechna, Warszawa 1991, p. 5.

once again the world, as after Alexander the Great, seems possible for human thought to grasp. Information spreads quickly. It is easy to move from place to place. The English koine helps people to communicate on a very important level (making it difficult on another one, but again, that is a problem for separate consideration by the new OBTA).

There are many similarities between our times and the Hellenistic period, of course *mutatis mutandis*. Besides those already mentioned, there is a particular increase in the power of Tyche, which we may be feeling just as strongly as the ancients in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. This powerful goddess of Fortune seems to open paths to achieve a great deal today, enabling instant success in every area of life, giving love, fame, and riches, but we cannot predict where Fortune's wheel will turn in the end. Sometimes someone touched with success suddenly falls into an abyss due to their own mistakes or hubris, and sometimes completely without cause, though of course no cause in human eyes does not mean there is none in the eyes of the goddess.

In a period so strongly marked by Tyche's presence, we are also accompanied by the other gods, and also the demigods and other figures and creatures from Greek and Roman mythology. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century we can speak of mythology's reloading, taking place – paradoxically – as a result of the waning of classical education. Memory of myths is gradually being ousted from curricula, people do not read the sources, the language keys to the mythical world – Latin and Greek – are disappearing from schools. However, this process is accompanied by an unusual and very inspirational side effect: mythology is beginning to garner interest as something “exotic.” Moreover, at the same time we still feel it is something dear to us. The fact is, myths largely shaped the civilization built upon the Mediterranean tradition. They circulate in the “subcutaneous” layer and you would have to renounce that civilization to forget them completely. Owing to this, the crisis is becoming an opportunity for development through rediscovering ancient culture, and seeking within it content important for us today.

The “reloading” of myths is also supported by the fact that, like the Greeks and Romans, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we have the courage (hubris?), to pull the gods down from Olympus to Earth. Highbrow and lowbrow, elitist and popular, niche and global culture – all have equal rights to exist. The

theatre of Dionysus evoking pity and fear, a statue of Priapus in the garden, a love poem describing a “flock” of Erores, graffiti of the “I was here” kind on the Memnon statue – all this shows how strongly the ancients were immersed in the mythical world. We have kept theatre, we still read books inspired by mythology, reaching for myths not only in fiction but also in comic books (as in the case of Antigone discussed earlier<sup>95</sup>), including the Japanese manga form, which again shows just how extensive is the sphere of ancient culture’s impact on the world today.



*Modulamina Puerilia* – a students’ concert within the conference *Our Mythical Childhood...* – Jan Czarnecki (baritone) and his ensemble: Michalina Jaxa-Larecka (flauto traverso I), Aleksandra Łaska (flauto traverso II), and Michał Własnowolski (harpsichord). UW’s Ballroom, May 23, 2013

Myths also have a prominent place in visual arts and in music: the kind of music that resounds mainly at opera houses and philharmonics as well as that of children’s tunes, lyrical songs, and even – speaking of opera –

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<sup>95</sup> See n. 75.

works from a genre known as “heavy metal opera.”<sup>96</sup> Mythology is also present in computer games<sup>97</sup> and films, from cinematic adventure movies, through cartoons for children, to TV series for teenagers or only for adults.

Finally, myths are with us at the level of very mundane references which nevertheless contain echoes of times when education was comprehensive, closer to Cicero’s *artes liberales*, and mythology helped understand the progress of civilization. We take our tires to a vulcanizer – a term left us by Charles Goodyear who developed a heat treatment method to improve rubber and dedicated it to the god of fire, Hephaestus-Vulcan. The first human landing on the Moon in 1969 took place thanks to NASA’s Apollo programme, which actually raises an interesting issue in terms of gender studies: a more “appropriate” patron for this programme would have been the lunar goddess Artemis-Diana.<sup>98</sup> However, instead of complaining about the lack of “mythological equal rights” it is worth noting that bringing Apollo down from Olympus to Earth and then sending him to the Moon is yet another example illustrating the mechanism of how the mirror of reception works – showing how the mentality of a given period is reflected in the way a given generation draws upon mythology.

Taking this aspect into consideration, the amount of material for studying is vast. A researcher could even find a source in the “philosophy” of a certain bicycle company that calls its products *Hercules* and runs advertising campaigns persuading prospective buyers that thanks to these bikes anyone – man or woman – can become a hero of daily life, for example

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<sup>96</sup> See, e.g., *The House of Atreus I–II* (1999–2000) by the band Virgin Steele. Actually, pop music and myths make up a very broad subject; apart from the above-mentioned references to Antigone in songs by Kora and Heaven Shall Burn, it is particularly worth noting the myth of Daedalus and Icarus in this context, see Katarzyna Marciniak, *Mitologia grecka i rzymska*, op. cit., pp. 122–124 (for the albums *The House of Atreus*, see p. 362).

<sup>97</sup> See n. 86.

<sup>98</sup> The name “Apollo” is said to have been chosen for the allegedly “attractive connotations” of the god, see Alan Dundes, *Parsing Through Customs. Essays by a Freudian Folklorist*, The University of Wisconsin Press, Wisconsin, Madison–London 1987, p. 45.



in getting their child safely to school.<sup>99</sup> Further completely original – if not even “bizarre” – evidence of the presence of the Hercules myth in our reality is that of a Russian animated cartoon advertising tests to find *Helicobacter pylori* bacteria, in which people are encouraged to get the tests by Hercules appearing in his cartoon self. The reference to Hercules – despite the said bizarre nature of the cartoon<sup>100</sup> – can even find some logical justification there. However, we must not ignore a whole range of non(?)sential references, to mention the name Medea chosen for an antibacterial soap.

In my view, even nonsensical references like this provide important testimony for studies on the presence of ancient culture in the 21<sup>st</sup> cen-

<sup>99</sup> See the information on the company’s website (nota bene, with a reference to Goethe’s *Erkönig*, as well): “Helden wie Du und ich: Hercules, traditionsreicher Hersteller unverwüstlicher Fahrräder, besinnt sich in seiner 2009 gestarteten Werbe Kampagne auf seine Wurzeln: Helden. Ganz dem Namensgeber Herkules folgend, dem Helden aus der griechischen Sage, zeigt die Kampagne Helden des Alltags. Helden, die Etappen schaffen, auf denen andere aufgeben. Helden, die ihre Kinder geborgen durch Nacht und Wind bringen und Helden, die immer wieder aufstehen, wenn sie aus dem Sattel kippen: Heldentum als ewig beständiger Wert,” <http://www.hercules-bikes.de/de/Hercules-Ueber-Uns-180,208.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

<sup>100</sup> See the film here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yjZcjSgXD0U> (consulted: Dec. 26, 2012). Working on *Mitologia grecka i rzymska...*, I realized just how great the scale of references to Antiquity in popular culture and daily life was. After finishing the book I decided to continue this research, and in the 2011/2012 academic year also proposed to my students that they go out to search for traces of ancient culture around us – specifically those related to the Hercules myth. We presented the results of our search, conducted during the degree seminar of the Mediterranean Civilization course, in the form of notes published on the Internet, where you can find more information about the above-mentioned film posted by Maria Kruhlak, and an entry about Hercules bicycles prepared by Agata Więclawska, in both cases the people who discovered these references. The whole database we gathered throughout the year is available on the web. My intention when making it freely available was that it might serve anyone interested in Antiquity, and especially pupils beginning to discover the wealth of the ancient world around us (sic!). I would like to thank all the seminar participants for their commitment which consolidates the idea of the University as a Community learning about the world and discovering new things, see <http://kamar.domeczek.pl/Seminarium%20dyplomowe%20materialy.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

ture – studies that are compatible with the new OBTA’s mission. Because, though sometimes our in-depth familiarity with them seems questionable, myths are still – I repeat – circulating in the “subcutaneous” layer of our civilization, they still help us “tame” the world, and contemporary people, just like the ancient Greeks or Romans, have a strong need for taming.



Team members and participants in the conference *Our Mythical Childhood...*, from the left: Joanna Kłos, Dr. Valentina Garulli, Prof. Farouk Grewing, via Skype on the screen: Prof. Edith Hall. Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Conference Room, White Villa, Dobra St. 72, May 25, 2013

This is well known to small humans and non-humans, i.e., children and animals and other creatures that do not fit into Linnaean taxonomy. When we grow up, we stop seeing hamadryads hiding in the tree trunks, but we do not stop building our identities using references to mythology. This is one of the still relevant functions of myths.

In fact, it is worth noting at this point that all of the functions that mythology had in Antiquity have survived. Of course myths do not explain

the world to the same extent as science, but even the ancients tried to comprehend most things using their reason, as anyone can see, for example, in the poem *De rerum natura* by Lucretius. However, mythology is present even in this “materialistic” epos from its very first line, for myths played and still play the important role in human endeavours to explain phenomena in the face of which science remains helpless, if by science we mean the ability to obtain unequivocal answers.

If, however, we perceive science in a broad sense and do not reject certain studies from the humanities as worthless only because they ask further questions instead of providing a single solution, then such a research approach, taking material from mythology and analyzing texts of culture based upon it, can give us a great deal. Myths illustrate certain universal laws, perhaps cruel ones, but awareness of them largely protects us against hubris and teaches us a still very necessary compassion toward other beings. Apart from the law of the contrite heart that Priam and Achilles came to know, there is also the law of the great desire to live, which Odysseus learned from Achilles when he called up the warrior’s spirit from Hades: “Say not a word [...] in death’s favour; I would rather be a paid servant in a poor man’s house and be above ground than king of kings among the dead,”<sup>101</sup> says the greatest hero of the Trojan War, who understood too late that by choosing eternal life in the memory of future generations at the cost of not fully experiencing humanity from youth until old age, he had made the wrong choice.

Wrong choices were also part of the story of King Oedipus, however, he had a very limited capacity to make autonomous decisions; though he did his best not to hurt his near and dear, he ultimately hurt them in the worst possible way. Antigone was among Oedipus’ victims. We tend to think the fate of Thebes’ ruler was unfair. We do not understand why Oedipus – this Greek Job – was so tragically tested. Yes, he sometimes committed the sin of hubris, though probably not to a greater degree than others, and his voluntary departure from the place he thought of as home to

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<sup>101</sup> Homer, *The Odyssey*, XI 489–491, trans. Samuel Butler, online: <http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/odyssey.11.xi.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

protect from himself the rulers he considered to be his parents testifies to his righteousness and pure heart. The tragedy of Antigone's father teaches us another law: that we do not have to understand. What is unjust chaos to humans could be the will of the gods – the Logos that controls the world according to a precisely defined plan. Not knowing the plan does not mean it does not exist and that it does not apply to us.



Team members and participants in the conference *Our Mythical Childhood...*, visible from the first row, from the left: Prof. Elizabeth Hale, Dr. Hanna Paulouskaya, Dr. Stefano Redaelli, Prof. Sheila Murnaghan, Prof. Deborah H. Roberts, Francesca M. Richards, Dr. Owen Hodkinson, Prof. György Karsai, Prof. Jerzy Axer, Joanna Kłos, Prof. Katarzyna Jerzak. UW's Ballroom, May 23, 2013

The next function of mythology is to provide a neutral language when other languages fail. Related to the personal sphere, myths enable certain intimate, difficult experiences to be universalized, as in the case of Czesław Miłosz, who, like Orpheus, wandered through the hell of the hospital,

bidding his Eurydice farewell in the language of art and mythology<sup>102</sup> while learning further cruel laws expressed in myths: that closeness implies loss and that you cannot turn back time.



Team members and participants in the conference *Our Mythical Childhood...*, visible from the first row: Prof. Katarzyna Jerzak, Prof. Robert A. Sucharski, Dr. Valentina Garulli, Francesca M. Richards, Prof. Helen Lovatt, Prof. Sheila Murnaghan, Dr. Cristian-Nicolae Gaspar, Dr. David Movrin, Dr. Elżbieta Olechowska, Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Michał Kucharski, Prof. Peter Tirop Simatei, Joanna Kłos, Sylwia Chmielewska. Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Conference Room, White Villa, Dobra St. 72, May 25, 2013

In collective contexts, the neutral language of mythology enables us to talk about problems that continue to cause controversy – hence the popularity of works based on Graeco-Roman tales in African countries, for example, where we would expect local mythologies to be used, given negative colonial experiences.

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<sup>102</sup> See Czesław Miłosz, *Orfeusz i Eurydyka*, Wydawnictwo Literackie, Kraków 2002. See also n. 10.

However, it is myths that are “classical” in the European sense that ensure the necessary distance and in situations of conflict appear to be the best code acceptable and understandable to the different sides in a discussion and outside of it.<sup>103</sup>

The above function of mythology is related to yet another one: myths as material accessible to every participant in culture, being subjected to artistic processing depending on the needs of a given time, enable people to overcome political or moral censorship and can be a commentary on reality. The case of Antigone, evoked here so many times, is one of the wealth of examples of this role of Antiquity – examples that provide excellent research topics for the new OBTA.

Finally, for centuries myths have been a source of pleasure gained from communing with art that draws inspiration from mythology, but also with mythological narrative itself, owing to its ability to please any taste – that of fans of adventure, romance, thrillers, but also philosophical reflection. Now, in the new millennium, thanks to the development of mass culture, stories based on myths are experiencing a renaissance. In-depth studies on this problem – for which the new OBTA has great potential – show that even seemingly superficial, unsophisticated, and commercially driven references to mythology can contain a surprisingly profound message.

*Hercules: The Legendary Journeys*, a TV series produced in 1995–1999 that was also a milestone in the development of the new-generation series so greatly successful to this day, apart from magnificent landscapes (it was shot in New Zealand, among other locations) offered viewers an unusual “mythological-postmodern mix,” and one that confounded many a classics scholar. Aphrodite surfing on a pink shell is not the only “traumatic experience” you can get from watching this series that has gained, in a certain sense, cult status.

In 2011 the actor playing the main part of Hercules, Kevin Sorbo, published an autobiography that made us look anew at the scenes featuring the hero and displaying particular charm: *True Strength: My Journey from*

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<sup>103</sup> See, e.g., Kevin J. Wetmore, Jr., *The Athenian Sun in an African Sky: Modern African Adaptations of Classical Greek Tragedy*, McFarland, North Carolina 2002.

*Hercules to Mere Mortal – and How Nearly Dying Saved My Life.*<sup>104</sup> The book tells us how Sorbo had a few strokes in 1997 due to an aneurysm. He was even paralyzed for a time and had to learn how to walk all over again. The wheel of Tyche-Fortune suddenly made its complete turn, in consequence of which this fit, athletic man, who was also involved in charity work, became reliant on the help of others. The TV series' producers concealed the actor's illness from viewers, reducing the number of scenes he was in. They were afraid Sorbo's changed image would damage the series' ratings. They were wrong, but at the time the myth of the invincible Hercules was still in force.

It is no longer in force in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Not only have the gods come down from Olympus, the heroes no longer want to stand on a pedestal, either. Sorbo's book is one piece of proof that the way we read mythology today is changing. Today the heroes are tired and do not conceal this fact. They are becoming closer to us. The attitude of the American actor who decided to tell people about his illness and how he overcame it in order to give them strength in similar situations makes Hercules really come alive for us. He is not a fictional protagonist from the remote past, but a hero who truly brings hope and builds our faith that, even if not everything is possible, a lot still is.

The reloading of myths that I have tried to present here by way of a few selected examples is a lesson in humility for the researcher. We should not lock ourselves in the world of masterpieces, completely cut off from the contemporary reception of Antiquity, even that on the most popular level and often representing very questionable aesthetic value. We should not scorn any sign of myths being alive. It is worth taking a closer look, if only to see how the ideas encoded in ancient masterpieces are surviving in the new millennium.

Undertaking studies on such problems, the new OBTA faces one more challenge: popularizing the heritage of Antiquity. Accepting the challenge means it will be necessary to keep searching for the right language to

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<sup>104</sup> See the book's website: <http://www.truestrengthbook.com> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013). I thank Michał Kucharski for the hint about this publication.

communicate with contemporary audiences, taking care to be clear, but also remembering there is a great difference between simplicity and simplification.



Team members and participants in the conference *Our Mythical Childhood...*, visible in rows from the left: Prof. Bettina Kümmerling-Meibauer, Prof. Deborah H. Roberts (speaking), Dr. Cristian-Nicolae Gaşpar, Dr. David Movrin, Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Agata Grzybowska, Prof. Jörg Schulte, Dr. Elżbieta Olechowska, Dr. Michał Mizera. Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” Conference Room, White Villa, Dobra St. 72, May 25, 2013

Popularization is a mission that the greatest researchers of Antiquity, starting with Zieliński, considered their duty despite opinions that it was a task for people with no “serious” connection to academic activity.<sup>105</sup> But it is just the opposite. Ancient culture’s place in 21<sup>st</sup>-century reality (and also the place of its researchers) will depend on who popularizes it – and how. Moreover, the essence of the popularizing mission involves a more

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<sup>105</sup> See Tadeusz Zieliński, *Autobiografia...*, op. cit., p. 181. See also Michał Mizera, *Introduction to Tadeusz Zieliński, Queen of the Wind Maidens...*, op. cit., p. 7, see n. 68.



important matter: indeed – if we are not afraid of lofty words – a matter of key importance for the condition of today’s world. The quality and means by which ancient culture is popularized define not only the fate of ancient heritage, but also the future of Graeco-Roman civilization. As the stories I have cited so far show (and they were only selected examples from a huge base that is expanding before our eyes – it is enough to start noticing them), we still need and draw upon the ancient tradition. We also still need guides so that we do not have to grope in the dark.



Markus Lüpertz’s sculpture *Der gestürzte Krieger* [A Fallen Warrior], Berlin, 2012

The new OBTA with its experience and research potential is an excellent *cicerone* (!) around the ancient world, able to ensure that the contact today’s recipients of culture have with the gods brought down from Olympus and the ancient heroes is not superficial, but in fact “direct and fully personal.”<sup>106</sup>

<sup>106</sup> See Anna Świderkówna, *Bogowie zeszli z Olimpu...*, op. cit., p. 5.

For only this kind of contact can ensure that the values the Greeks and Romans passed on in their masterpieces will help us find ourselves in our “neo-Hellenistic” world.

### **Waiting for the Barbarians...**

Responding to the criticism that the ancient Masters of Mediterranean civilization were subject to after World War II, Ettore Paratore, the great Italian researcher of Antiquity and Ciceronian scholar, suggested calming down. The new generations’ rebellion against the heritage of the past, he wrote, is natural. It is an element of a classic’s “inevitable destiny” (“ineluttabile destino”).<sup>107</sup>

Similar optimism, though seemingly much less justified in the context of the crisis of classical education continuing since the 1960s, is noticeable in a lecture presented in 1991 and then published as an essay by John Maxwell Coetzee – one of the greatest contemporary writers, a Nobel Prize winner, a man sensitive to issues of borders and identity because of his experience living in his homeland, South Africa, where the Graeco-Roman culture of the colonizers came into contact with the culture of the region’s natives. And the consequences and effects of that contact have not been “given” once and for all – they are continually being built anew due to the changes occurring in the world. Coetzee is an astute observer of these processes.<sup>108</sup>

Taking the floor on the eve of the new millennium in Graz, Austria, Coetzee gave his lecture the only possible title after Sainte-Beuve and Eliot: *What Is a Classic?* He thus gave his listeners a clear clue that they should accept his lecture in the context of the discussion, continuing for generations, on the essence of our civilization. The writer’s lecture was also a fervent defense of freedom of speech and the right to express diverse opinions, even if at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century they tend toward criticism and questioning of the value of the masterpieces of classical culture. Like

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<sup>107</sup> See Ettore Paratore, *Cicerone attraverso i secoli*, “Ciceroniana” 1 (1959), p. 111.

<sup>108</sup> It is worth adding that Coetzee does not remain indifferent to the fate of animals, see J.M. Coetzee, *The Lives of Animals*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 1999.

Paratore, Coetzee also appealed for calm. The masterpieces are safe. Each rebellion gives them new life, it becomes a means of creative reinterpretation of the classics and of dialogue above time and above borders.<sup>109</sup>



One of the sculptures by the Italian artist Mirella Guasti, from her art exhibition in a street leading to Piazza Maggiore, Bologna, 2011

Looking at the fate of the ancient tradition from this perspective, we can agree that one of the key tasks of all the members of the Graeco-Roman community, including those meeting together at the new OBTA, is to prevent not so much criticism as indifference to ancient culture, because it is indifference that has the true destructive power. It is what condemns

<sup>109</sup> See J.M. Coetzee, *Stranger Shores: Literary Essays, 1986–1999*, Penguin Books, New York 2001, pp. 1–16; Polish translation of the essay by Marcin Szuster available at: <http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/wydarzenia/artykuly/174437,kto-to-jest-klaszy.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013). See also Katarzyna Marciniak, *Po co mitologia? – Świat współczesny w zwierciadle mitu*, “PAUza Akademicka. Tygodnik Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności” 103–105 (2010), pp. 9–11, online: [http://pauza.krakow.pl/103\\_105\\_9\\_11\\_2010.pdf](http://pauza.krakow.pl/103_105_9_11_2010.pdf) (consulted: Oct. 15, 2013). See also Sotera Fornaro, *Che cos'è un classico?: Il classico in J.M. Coetzee*, Edizioni di Pagina, Bari 2013.

masterpieces of the past to the worst punishment of all – damnatio memoriae.

But how can we protect the heritage of Classical Antiquity from being pushed to the margins of contemporary civilization? The result of the analysis of the examples cited here is unequivocal: there is no need to prove that ancient culture deserves a place in our world. That much is clear, as is the answer to the question: Cui bono? Nobis omnibus. Furthermore, successive generations keep reaching for that culture, even though theoretically – due to the changes in the education system – they should have long ago lost touch with Antiquity. So we should support all kinds of efforts to stay in touch with this marvellous epoch, by creating the necessary space and conditions. The new OBTA can be active in many ways in this context, including research projects and popularization of their results, ventures in education in the spirit of artes liberales, and by initiating a dialogue in which the right to speak freely will be given to people from different regions, children, animals as well as other non-humans that have many important ideas to share with us – as the experience of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” shows.<sup>110</sup>

In this, we need to do our best to make sure this dialogue unfolds without hubris and without showing superiority toward barbarians, of whom there are plenty, but who also deserve a chance to learn about the heritage of Classical Antiquity and decide whether or not to accept it. Paradoxically, there is also some value in rejection, because even brief contact with ancient culture, even if only to question its achievements, opens us up to the common code and to a dialogue that would otherwise be difficult or even impossible. Not without reason does the word “barbarian” originate from the onomatopoeic “bar, bar” that the Hellenes used to express the inability to communicate with strangers.

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<sup>110</sup> See the debate organized by Prof. Jan Kieniewicz *Po co ludziom krasnoludki? Czemu ludzie tworzą nieludzi?* [*Why Do People Need Dwarves? Why Do People Create Non-Humans?*], at the conference *Ludzie i krasnoludki – powinowactwa z wyboru?* [*People and Dwarves – Ties by Choice?*], published later with glosses in *Debaty IBI AL, tom II 2009*, eds. Jan Kieniewicz, Natalia Kotsyba, Marek Szczypek, Katarzyna Tomaszuk, Instytut Badań Interdyscyplinarnych „Artes Liberales”, Warszawa 2010, pp. 86–142.

Since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, more and more often heaven has been “talking some foreign tongue,” as Zbigniew Herbert, the great representative of Mediterranean culture from Sarmatia, wrote in his poem *To Marcus Aurelius*, and it is not just a question of fewer people knowing Latin. Barbarians were always quick learners, after all. Moreover, great civilizations developed thanks to barbarians<sup>111</sup> who, to quote another excellent Mediterranean poet, Constantine Cavafy from Egyptian Alexandria, were always “a kind of solution.”<sup>112</sup>

*Waiting for the Barbarians* is both the title of the poem (1898) by Cavafy, from which the above quote comes, and also of the famous novel (1980) by Coetzee, which shows yet again that the Mediterranean community exceeds geographical borders. The South African writer’s book presents a civilization consumed by hubris that destroys foreigners without giving them a chance to access the “better world,” and which persecutes some undefined tribes (an intentional literary move so as not to write point blank that this element of destruction manifests itself maybe also in our civilization...) out of a sense of superiority. The novel’s main character, a magistrate who has long supported the system’s cruel deeds and its oppressive policy toward barbarians, finally decides to take their side. He realizes it will not change much and that he will pay a high or even the highest price for his rebellion. He nevertheless decides on a gesture of opposition, following in Antigone’s footsteps and defending the excluded because that

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<sup>111</sup> See, e.g., *Greeks and Barbarians*, ed. Thomas Harrison, Routledge, New York 2002; Kostas Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2013.

<sup>112</sup> Constantine P. Cavafy, *Collected Poems*, trans. Edmund Keeley & Philip Sherrard, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 1992, p. 18 (for the poem *Thermopylae* quoted below, see p. 15). Cavafy’s poems were also translated by Daniel Mendelsohn who referred to the *Waiting for the Barbarians* in his essay “*Waiting for the Barbarians*” and *the Government Shutdown*, “The New Yorker,” Oct. 1, 2013, <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/books/2013/10/waiting-for-the-barbarians-and-the-government-shutdown.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013). The text contains an interesting analysis of the poem in reference to our times. See also Daniel Mendelsohn, *Waiting for the Barbarians: Essays from the Classics to Pop Culture*, The New York Review of Books, New York 2012.

is what the daimonion of conscience, which he has suppressed for too long, makes him do.

Coetzee's novel, which caused him serious problems with the censors, poses an important question for today – for he asks about the essence of barbarianism. Barbarianism means destroying other civilizations just because they are different. Meanwhile, as the history of the reception of Classical Antiquity shows us, it is where different cultures meet that unique possibilities for developing the Graeco-Roman heritage appear. Today, too, we have such possibilities thanks to barbarians.

Today's barbarians, however, are not approaching from outside. Whoever expects foreign invaders will share the fate of the internally burned out characters in the novel *The Tartar Steppe* (1940) by another Mediterranean author, Italian writer Dino Buzzati. Today we raise barbarians in ourselves. Changes in education that cause the Ciceronian spirit of *artes liberales* to weaken are giving rise to internal barbarianism. Slowly and imperceptibly, we are becoming barbarians ourselves. Counteracting this process is also a task for the new OBTA. In the thick of the battle, though, we need to see the bright side of the situation in which ancient culture finds itself today. Its exotic character and simultaneous closeness – a paradox that has come up here many times – enables us to feel optimistic (or maybe even OBTA-mistic). The fabulous Antiquity popularized so wonderfully by Zieliński is our common fairy tale. Moreover, like the Greek *aoidos* or the contemporary scriptwriter in Hollywood, each one of us, too – the enchanted barbarian in the ancient and still blossoming garden<sup>113</sup> – has the right to add a continuation.

References to Classical Antiquity in contemporary civilization can be breathtaking (masterpieces are created even today), they can also be irritating. The different reactions of different recipients of culture are a natural mechanism of reception, and diversity is not a fault, something that Greek and Roman artists already knew, often using the rule of *variatio*, or even *horror vacui*. An original or – from a conservative viewpoint – even “bizarre” text of culture sometimes becomes a door into the ancient world.

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<sup>113</sup> See Zbigniew Herbert, *Barbarzyńca w ogrodzie*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1962.

One example of this phenomenon is the movie *300* (2006) directed by Zack Snyder. Based on the comic book by Frank Miller, this often parodied production<sup>114</sup> with its unique poetics has become a 21<sup>st</sup>-century carrier of the myth of Thermopylae, familiarizing young audiences with it. *Nota bene*, the movie made a huge impression on the members of the Heaven Shall Burn band mentioned above in the context of the reception of the myth of Antigone. At one of their concerts in 2010 the musicians staged a battle of fans entitled *Defending Sparta*, giving the participants special T-shirts, as an original way of preserving the memory of Leonidas' heroic unit. The performance was recorded on video. That is not all, though. It is worth noting that the reception of *300*, and thus of events from the history of the Greek-Persian wars, has gone beyond an isolated artistic event. To this day, the movie is interpreted in terms of the campaign in Iraq, confirming the soundness of the idea that the way we draw upon Antiquity can serve as a mirror of our own times. The key to such a "political" interpretation was provided of course by the theme of the clash of two civilizations, an idea originating from Herodotus, visually contrasted in *300*: the "despotic East" vs. the "democratic West."<sup>115</sup> It would be hard to find clearer traces that ancient culture is alive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As it is a culture that arouses emotions, therefore it is.

This kind of contact with ancient heritage, for many young people their first, is extremely important because it not only restores the memory of Classical Antiquity but also makes all other references to this heritage appearing over the centuries comprehensible, for example those present in Cavafy's poem *Thermopylae*. Of course most of the young people who saw *300* might not come across the poem by themselves, but that is another task for the new OBTA and all admirers of Antiquity: let's take advantage of such opportunities to suggest masterpieces to successive generations of recipients of culture. I am convinced that these works are able to stand up

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<sup>114</sup> The parodies, *nota bene*, lead to further popularization of the ancient motifs used. Moreover, the second part is scheduled for 2014 – *300: Rise of an Empire*.

<sup>115</sup> Of course there are plenty of critical opinions pointing out the cliché nature of this approach, but it is worth noting that clichés are also a part of the comic-book poetics that the creators of this production chose to use.

for themselves before a new but still sensitive audience hungry for genuine emotions. And we do not need to simplify anything in them. Popular culture will provide the key to understanding the historical background, where teachers with even the best of intentions and the greatest effort do not have enough time to explain it in school, whereas the poem's actual message requires no commentary. It is strikingly simple, as is always the case with masterpieces:

### **Thermopylae**

Honor to those who in the life they lead  
define and guard a Thermopylae.  
Never betraying what is right,  
consistent and just in all they do  
but showing pity also, and compassion;  
generous when they are rich, and when they are poor,  
still generous in small ways,  
still helping as much as they can;  
always speaking the truth,  
yet without hating those who lie.

And even more honor is due to them  
when they foresee (as many do foresee)  
that in the end Ephialtis will make his appearance,  
that the Medes will break through after all.

Trans. Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard

Reading masterpieces, as Poland's 19<sup>th</sup>-century poet Cyprian Norwid once pointed out, never ends.<sup>116</sup> Neither does our dialogue with ancient culture. Therefore there may be something more than the irony of History in the version of the myth which says that the barbarian Medes came from Medos,<sup>117</sup> son of Medea and Aegaeus, ruler of Athens and stepbrother of

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<sup>116</sup> See Jerzy Axer, *Z Horacjusza*, in *Cyprian Norwid – interpretacje. Materiały sesji*, Warszawa, 21–22 kwietnia 1983 r., ed. Stanisław Makowski, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa 1986, pp. 59–70.

<sup>117</sup> See Strabo, *Geogr.* 11.13.10(526).



Theseus – the hero who brought peace to Hellas and built the foundations of democracy.

The Medes will break through – Cavafy has no illusions there, but his poem is optimistic nevertheless. The poet finds sources of optimism in the heroism of Thermopylae's defenders. The Alexandrian's words not only harmonize beautifully with the chorus's song in Sophocles' *Antigone* about the power of man, but also enrich that message. The Modern Greek poet draws upon Antiquity just like Sainte-Beuve suggested: he looks into the past to lead us a step further, to give us support and hope for the future. Thanks to Cavafy the defenders of Thermopylae – a lost cause – find what Antigone in her shared love for the dead did not have time to discover: pity for the living – shared suffering and the compassion that might have cured Creon of his shared hate.

Antigone has matured over the centuries of her presence in culture, and the metaphor of Thermopylae has expanded, inspiring successive generations to commemorate and honour heroes on many fronts around the world, to mention only the Polish soldiers at Monte Cassino.<sup>118</sup> But what about the barbarians to whom we also belong at various stages in our lives? The only road for barbarians leads through the pass of Thermopylae to... Greece. It is an extraordinary paradox testifying to the greatness of ancient culture that forcing our way through Thermopylae, we stop being barbarians and enter the Mediterranean community – from then on, we can observe successive Antigones or follow in their footsteps.

The mission of the new OBTA is not to waste the Centre's and our Masters' achievements, and to guard that pass so as not to lose anyone who might want to join the group of admirers of Classical Antiquity. We can be a centre, in fact, a hub – a place where we can have a contemporary omphalos placed and where representatives of different regions and generations, not only from the species *Homo sapiens*, can meet to talk. Let us no longer choose: Plato or locomotives? Reading *Antigone* or...? Let us not separate disciplines, but build an identity founded on the ancient tradition –

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<sup>118</sup> See the epitaph modeled on the distich by Simonides: *Passer-by, tell Poland that here we lie, having served her faithfully*. See also [http://www.montecassino.org/pl/cmentarze\\_polski\\_na\\_montecassino.php](http://www.montecassino.org/pl/cmentarze_polski_na_montecassino.php) (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).

the identity of researchers, students, everyone who forms the University as well as recipients of culture from outside academia. In our times this is the way to revive the still so very needed idea of a community – “to extend our hand across the dark”<sup>119</sup> – without hubris, as that would threaten not so much the gods (again, they descended from Olympus long ago), as it would humans.

Ancient culture teaches us freedom, respect, and courage. Though we still do not understand Antigone, we do understand her gesture. And as fabulous Antiquity and History teach us, sometimes a small gesture can change everything.

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<sup>119</sup> See Zbigniew Herbert’s poem *To Marcus Aurelius*, trans. Czesław Miłosz and Peter Dale Scott, online at: <http://999poems.blogspot.com/2011/06/823-to-marcus-aurelius-by-zbigniew.html> (consulted: Nov. 6, 2013).



## NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

**JERZY AXER** – classical philologist, student of Professor Kazimierz Kumaniecki and Professor Lidia Winniczuk, Dean of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” at the University of Warsaw. He wrote his MA thesis (1969) under the supervision of Professor Lidia Winniczuk (source edition: Joannes Joncre, *Tragoedia Boleslaus Secundus Furens*, published by Ossolineum, 1972). He defended his doctoral dissertation *Georgius Ticinius – humanista i dyplomata* [*Georgius Ticinius – Humanist and Diplomat*], supervised by Professor Lidia Winniczuk, in 1972 (upon the dissertation he published three books: source editions and a monograph) and he obtained his post-doctoral degree (“habilitacja”) in 1976 (*Mowa Cycerona w obronie aktora komediowego Roscjusza: studium z krytyki tekstu*, Ossolineum, 1975; *The Style and the Composition of Cicero’s Speech Pro Q. Roscio Comoedo*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1980, and the speech edition at Teubner’s, 1976) at the Faculty of Polish Studies of the University of Warsaw. He became a UW associate professor in 1977. After the “Solidarity” watershed he was elected Deputy Dean and then Dean of the UW’s Faculty of Polish Studies (1981–1987). He received the academic title of professor in 1986. He taught at the UW’s Institute of Classical Studies and at the Theatre Academy. He was the founder (in 1991) and Director of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA), transformed in 2008 into the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (IBI AL), which in 2012 was promoted to the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” (FAL). At the UW, he established and developed the Inter-Faculty Individual Studies in the Humanities (MISH) and the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH), heading both for many years. He is President of the Council of the “Artes Liberales” Institute Foundation (FIAL) and Chairman of the Council of the »Artes Liberales« Academy (AAL). Elected a member of the Polish Academy

of Sciences (PAN) and the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAU). He is a member of the Polish Philological Society (PTF; Vice-President in 1986–1992, and President in 1992–2001), the International Society for the History of Rhetoric (Vice-President in 1997–1999, President in 1999–2001, Past-President in 2001–2003), Academia Europaea, the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies, the Warsaw Scientific Society (TNW), Academia Latinitati Fovendae. His fields of interest include Cicero, Neo-Latin studies, textual criticism, theatre, and the reception of Classical Antiquity as well as issues from the field of Animal Studies. He is the author of more than 500 publications: books, editions of source texts, and academic papers. He is a member of editorial councils of several academic series and journals. In 1996 he received the Gold Cross of the Order of the Phoenix – one of the highest Greek distinctions, and in 1998 – the Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta. He received an honorary doctoral degree from the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in 2003. He is a recipient of the *Nulla dies sine linea* Prize awarded by a committee comprising students of Professor Stefania Światłowska (2011).

**MAŁGORZATA BOROWSKA** – classical philologist and Modern Greek scholar, graduate of the University of Warsaw. She wrote her MA thesis *Aluzje polityczne w zachowanych tragediach Eurypidesa* [*Political Allusions in Euripides' Extant Tragedies*] under the supervision of Professor Kazimierz Kumaniecki (1974). In 1984 she obtained a doctoral degree in the humanities based on her dissertation on the political theatre of Euripides, supervised by Professor Kazimierz Kumaniecki and, after he passed away, Professor Hanna Szelest (dissertation published as: *Le théâtre politique d'Euripide. Problèmes choisis*, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1985). She obtained her postdoctoral degree (“habilitacja”) in 1994 following the publication of the book *OIKEIA PRAGMATA. Z dziejów dramatis personae rodzinnej komedii greckiej następców Arystofanesa* [*OIKEIA PRAGMATA. From the Tradition of Dramatis Personae in Greek Family Comedy after Aristophanes*] (Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1995). She received the academic title of professor in 2009. She is a member of the Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish

Academy of Sciences (KNoKA PAN). She has completed a twelve-month scholarship at Aristotle University in Thessaloniki (twice) and at Ioannis Kapodistrias University in Athens. Affiliated with OBTA from the very beginning. Founder and manager of OBTA's first laboratory: the Laboratory of Hellenic Studies, and Poland's first-ever university programme in Modern Greek Studies. Initiator and editor of the "Arcydziała Literatury Nowogreckiej" ["Masterpieces of Modern Greek Literature"] series (ten volumes have been published so far) promoting the greatest works of Modern Greek writers in translations prepared with the contribution of students. The author of numerous translations from Ancient and Modern Greek as well as textbooks for learning these languages (*Mormolyke. Książka do nauki języka starogreckiego* [*Mormolyke. Handbook of Ancient Greek*], OBTA–Wydawnictwo Wiedza Powszechna, 1996; *Barbajorgos. Książka do nauki języka nowogreckiego* [*Barbajorgos. Handbook of Modern Greek*], Wydawnictwo Wiedza Powszechna, 2000). Her interests include sailing ships, historical crime fiction, children's literature, hippology, and theatre.

**SYLWIA CHMIELEWSKA** – graduate in Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales," University of Warsaw. In 2011 she defended her BA thesis *Reinterpretacje mitów greckich w kulturze popularnej na przykładzie wybranych gier komputerowych i konsolowych* [*Reinterpretations of Greek Myths in Popular Culture Exemplified by Chosen Computer and Console Games*], supervised by Professor Katarzyna Marciniak, who also tutored her MA thesis *Recepcja historii i kultury starożytnej Grecji i Rzymu w wybranych komputerowych grach strategicznych* [*Modern Reception of Ancient Greek & Roman History and Culture as Exemplified in Selected Strategy Computer Games*], defended in 2013 and praised by the Academic Council of the Faculty of "Artes Liberales." Her interests include the reception of Graeco-Roman Antiquity in popular culture – mainly computer games and commercial cinematography. She took part in the project *Our Mythical Childhood... Classics and Children's Literature Between East & West* with a poster presentation: *Hercules in Computer Games: A Heroic Evolution*. At present, she is

a PhD student at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” and she is working on her dissertation entitled *Los, fatum, przeznaczenie: miejsce mitu grecko-rzymskiego w grach komputerowych* [*Chance, Fate, Destiny: The Role of Graeco-Roman Myth in Computer Games*], which aims at capturing the newest tendencies in the reception of Graeco-Roman myths in this one of the youngest spheres of culture.

**JAN KIENIEWICZ** – historian, diplomat, his fields of interest include the history of India and pre-colonial expansion, Spain in the modern age and contemporary times, and the history of Poland and Europe. He defended his doctoral dissertation, written under Professor Marian Małowist’s supervision, in 1966. In 1974 he obtained his postdoctoral degree (“habilitacja”) in modern history at the University of Warsaw’s Institute of History. A scholarship took him to L’École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris in 1964, where he worked with Professor Fernand Braudel. He received the academic title of professor in 1983. He was Head of the UW’s Institute of Iberian Studies in 1975–1981, Deputy Director of the UW’s Institute of History in 1981–1988, and Polish Ambassador to Spain in 1990–1994. Deputy Director of OBTA and then the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (IBI AL) in 1996–2008. He headed OBTA as a unit of IBI AL for a year after he retired. At present he is Head of the Laboratory of Interdisciplinary Research Artes Liberales (LIBAL) and the Sofia Casanova Laboratory which focuses on Spanish and Polish-Spanish issues. He is Chairman of the Board of the “Artes Liberales” Institute Foundation (FIAL) as well as Head of the Networked Transdisciplinary Doctoral Studies programme run by the UW’s Faculty of “Artes Liberales” together with the Faculty of History. For the past 15 years he has been studying the history of civilization in a comparative approach. He heads several research projects: *The Polish-Spanish Corpus Diplomaticum*, *The Silent Intelligentsia: A Study of Civilizational Oppression, Drifting Identity*. He is involved in the International PhD Projects (MPD) – programme of the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP), at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” implemented since 2010 within the scope of the research theme: *The Traditions of Mediterranean Humanism and the Challenges of Our*

*Times: The Frontiers of Humanity*. Since 2013 he has been coordinating the Transdisciplinary PhD Programme *Searching Identity: Global Challenges, Local Traditions*. As part of the *Academia in Public Discourse* programme's pilot project *Opening the Window: Poland-Russia*, he coordinates the *Siberian-Polish Research Group*. He has written more than 450 publications, including 25 books. His latest published book is *Wyraz na ustach zapomniany. Polskich inteligentów zmagania z ojczyzną [A Word Their Lips Have Forgotten. Polish Intelligentsia's Conflicted Patriotism]* (Wydawnictwo DiG, 2012). In 1994 Spain presented him with a high distinction: La Cruz Grande de la Orden de Isabel la Católica. On November 11, 2013 he was awarded the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta for his outstanding contribution to the development of Polish-Russian relations.

**JOANNA KŁOS** – a graduate in Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization and Classical Philology in the framework of the Collegium MISH; student of Professor Katarzyna Marciniak. She prepared her MA thesis – entitled *Hominum fama loquitur. Plotka o kobiecie w literaturze starożytnego Rzymu [Hominum fama loquitur. Gossip about Women in Ancient Roman Literature]* and defended *summa cum laude* (2011) – during a research stay at the University of Bologna financed by the Italian Government Grant. She helped run the research office of the *Our Mythical Childhood... Classics and Children's Literature Between East & West* project and she took part in it, working on the theme: *Telemachus Wearing Jeans: Adam Bahdaj's Reception of the Myth about Odysseus' Son*. At present, as a PhD student at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales," she is working on the project on the application of the vocabulary covering the semantic field of gossip and rumour in Cicero's texts (working title: *Perferet multa etiam ipse rumor. Functions of Gossip in Marcus Tullius Cicero's Writings*), she is carrying out in the framework of the "Diamond Grant" programme of the Ministry for Science and Higher Education. In 2013 she completed a research query in London. Her interests include also the reception of Classical Antiquity in contemporary culture. She is a certificated Warsaw city-guide.



**MICHAŁ KUCHARSKI** – a Classical Philology graduate of the Institute of Classical Studies at the UW’s Faculty of Polish Studies and a graduate in Cultural Studies – Mediterranean Civilization of the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies “Artes Liberales” (today the UW’s Faculty of “Artes Liberales”). He wrote his MA theses, *QUID EST CYNTHIA? Trzy próby lektury elegii Propertiusza* [*QUID EST CYNTHIA? Three Attempts to Read Propertius’ Elegies*] (2007) and *Katullus i Juwencjusz. Analiza i interpretacja wybranych utworów neoteryka* [*Catullus and Iuvenius: An Analysis and Interpretation of Selected Catullus’ Poems*] (2008) under the supervision of Professor Katarzyna Marciniak. As a PhD student of the Faculty of “Artes Liberales,” in the doctoral dissertation which he is preparing with the same supervisor, *Civis Romanus czy civis Amoris? Koncepcja Rzymianina w elegiach Propertiusza* [*Civis Romanus or civis Amoris? The Notion of the Roman in the Elegies of Propertius*], he analyses the impact of the *vir vere Romanus* ideal on the structure of the elegiac persona and the represented world in Propertius’ oeuvre. He helped run the research office of the *Our Mythical Childhood... Classics and Children’s Literature Between East & West* project. His main fields of interest include literature and politics in the Augustan period and the reception of Graeco-Roman Antiquity in recent culture. Among other things, he has presented the results of his research on these problems at a seminar entitled *Metamorphoses of the Gods and the Birth of Modern Imagination* organized in 2013 by the Centre for Research on the Stanisław August Poniatowski Period at the Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw (paper: *Are We Witnessing a Metamorphosis of the Ovidius-Polonus Myth? The Reception of Ovid in Polish Culture after 1945*). He has received scholarships from the University of Warsaw, the “Artes Liberales” Institute Foundation (FIAL) and the Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MNiSW). As a recipient of scholarships from the Italian Government, in 2007 and 2009 he went on research visits to Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche, Geografiche e dell’ Antichità (Università degli Studi di Padova), supervised by Professor Giovanni Ravenna.

**KATARZYNA MARCINIAK** – classical philologist, Italianist, graduate of the UW’s Collegium MISH, a student of Professor Jerzy Axer, who supervised her doctoral dissertation *Cicero vortit barbare. Przekłady mówcy jako narzędzie manipulacji ideologicznej* [*Cicero vortit barbare: Translations of the Orator as Tools of Ideological Manipulation*], defended in 2004 (published by słowo/obraz terytoria, 2008). This work won her the Polish Prime Minister’s Prize. She obtained her postdoctoral degree (“habilitacja”) in 2009 on the basis of the treatise *Pro Cicerone poeta. Poezja Marka Tulliusza Cyncerona na przestrzeni stuleci* [*Pro Cicerone poeta. The Poetry of Marcus Tullius Cicero Through the Centuries*] (published by IBI AL, 2008), at the UW’s Faculty of Polish Studies. She is an associate professor and Director of the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA) at the UW’s Faculty of “Artes Liberales.” She has been awarded a Minister of Science and Higher Education Scholarship for Outstanding Young Researchers and the Academic Prize of the weekly “Polityka.” In 2012 she was elected to the Academy of Young Scholars at the Polish Academy of Sciences. She is a member of Societas Humboldtiana Polonorum, the Classical Reception Studies Network (Open University) and Sonderforschungsbereich 644 – Transformationen der Antike (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Freie Universität Berlin, and Max Planck Institute for the History of Science). She has received scholarships from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP), the “Artes Liberales” Institute Foundation (FIAL), and the Italian Government. A beneficiary of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education’s Mobility Plus programme and recipient of the Harvard University Loeb Classical Library Foundation Grant. She completed a postdoctoral research stay at Freie Universität Berlin (2006–2007) and has carried out projects at Università di Bologna (2002, 2005, 2011), Universität Wien (2005), and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin (2012–2014) thanks to research grants and the hospitality of eminent classicists: Prof. Ivano Dionigi, Prof. Camillo Neri, Prof. Ulrich Schmitzer, Prof. Bernd Seidensticker, and Prof. Alfonso Traina. She wrote *Mitologia grecka i rzymska* [*Greek and Roman Mythology*] (WSzPWN, 2010), for which she received the Klio Prize. She introduces the youngest readers to the world of myths in the book *Moja pier-*

*wsza mitologia [My First Mythology]* (Wydawnictwo Nasza Księgarnia, 2013). She writes poems for children that blend the traditions of classical children's poetry with modern content. The characters in her poems include cats surfing the Internet, mosquitoes dancing the tango, and mules using a dishwasher. In 2013 the Committee of the Council for the Polish Language at the Polish Academy of Sciences awarded her the title of Young Ambassador of the Polish Language.

**JUSTYNA OLKO** – historian, researcher of the pre-Columbian culture of Mesoamerica, Deputy Dean for Young Academic Staff at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” at the University of Warsaw and Head of the Laboratory Encounters Between the Old and New Worlds. She obtained a doctoral degree in the humanities in 2005 at the UW's Faculty of History for a dissertation on the attributes and iconography of power among the Aztec elites before and after the conquest of Mexico. She specializes in the ethno-history and anthropology of pre-Hispanic and colonial Mesoamerica, with a special focus on Nahua culture, Nahuatl language philology and linguistics, and issues of European-intercultural communication in a broad sense. In 2013 Justyna Olko initiated a monolingual editorial series “Totlahtol” [“Our Speech”] aimed at the restoration of literary culture in Nahuatl. She is also involved in a programme for revitalizing the Nahuatl language and works with researchers and activists committed to revitalizing dying languages of ethnic minorities in Poland. She has written several books, including *Turquoise Diadems and Staffs of Office. Insignia of Power in Aztec and Early Colonial Mexico* (University of Warsaw, 2005), *Meksyk przed konkwistą [Mexico before the Conquest]* (PIW, 2010, Klio Prize 2010) and *Insignia of Rank in the Nahua World* (University Press of Colorado, 2014). A recipient of scholarships from Dumbarton Oaks (Harvard University, 2001, 2008) and the John Carter Brown Library (Brown University, 2010), she has also received grants for team projects (European Research Council Starting Grant for the project *Europe and America in Contact. A Multidisciplinary Study of Cross-Cultural Transfer in the New World across Time*, 2012, the first and only so far ERC grant for the humanities in Poland), grants from the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP, Programmes: Focus,

2010; Idee dla Polski, 2013; Focus bis, 2013), the National Science Centre (NCN, 2008, 2011), the Ministry of Science and Higher Education as part of the National Programme for the Development of Humanities (NPRH, 2012). She has been awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (2013) and a Burgen Fellowship by Academia Europaea (2013).

**KRZYSZTOF RUTKOWSKI** – writer and translator, professor and Deputy Dean for Research at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” at the University of Warsaw. He obtained his doctoral degree at the UW’s Faculty of Polish Studies. He left for France in 1984. After 30 years spent in Paris (working with Université Paris 8, Institut Catholique de Paris, Centre du Dialogue des Pères Pallottins, Association Institut Littéraire Kultura, “Kontakt” monthly, Radio Free Europe, and Radio France Internationale) he returned to Warsaw to work with students. He is the Deputy Head for Teaching at the Collegium Artes Liberales (CLAS). He has written a number of books, including *Braterstwo albo śmierć. Zabijanie Mickiewicza w Kole Sprawy Bożej* [*Brotherhood or Death. The Killing of Mickiewicz in the Circle of God’s Cause*] (published by Libella, 1988; further editions: Oficyna Literacka, 1989, słowo/obraz terytoria, 1997) which won him the Kościelski Foundation Literary Prize (1989); *Stos dla Adama albo kacerze i kapłani. Studium w czternastu odstonach o sporze zmartwychwstańców z towiańczykami* [*The Stake to Burn Adam at, or Heretics and Priests. A Study in Fourteen Scenes about the Dispute between Resurrectionists and Towiańskiites*] (Fundacja Historia Pro Futuro and Bellona, 1994) – the book became the basis for his postdoctoral degree (“habilitacja”) at the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences; *Paryskie pasaże. Opowieść o tajemnych przejściach* (słowo/obraz terytoria, 1995, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition in 1996; translations: *Passages parisiens. Chronique d’un écrivain polonais*, trans. Frédérique Laurent, Exils, 1998; *Pariser Passagen. Aufzeichnungen eines Flaneurs*, trans. Olaf Kühl, Rospo Verlag, 1999); *Mistrz. Widowisko* [*Master. A Show*] (słowo/obraz terytoria, 1996; a revival of the Romantic play which premiered on the Monday night Television Theatre programme in Warsaw in 1997; special mention from the Polish Culture Foundation for 1996); *Wokulski w Paryżu* [*Wokulski in Paris*]

(słowo/obraz terytoria, 2010), *Dar Anioła* [*Angel's Gift*] (Iskry, 2012). With Henryk Bereza and Ziemowit Feddecki, he prepared a five-volume edition of Edward Stachura's output in prose and poetry, *Pisma wierszem i prozą* [*The Prose and Poetical Works*] (four editions in the 1980s) as well as compiled two separate selections of Stachura's poetry. He studied Aleksander Wat's archive and consequently reconstructed and edited three volumes of previously unknown works by Wat. He translates from French, including authors such as Dominique Bauby, Daniel Beauvois, Pascal Quignard. His hobbies include running and martial arts, and he has an interest in model planes.

**ANNA SKOLIMOWSKA** – Classical Philology graduate (1985–1992, Institute of Classical Studies, Faculty of Polish Studies, UW), her MA thesis was *Z archiwum Mikołaja Serafina – żupnika wielickiego i bocheńskiego – wybór korespondencji z lat 1441–1459* [*From the Archive of Mikołaj Serafin – Salt Mine Manager in Wieliczka and Bochnia: A Selection of Correspondence from 1441–1459*]. She obtained her doctoral degree in the humanities from the UW's Faculty of Polish Studies in 2000, on the basis of a dissertation written under the supervision of Professor Jerzy Axer: *Łacińskie listy Jana Dantyszka z roku 1537. Edycja krytyczna, problemy metodologiczne* [*Ioannes Dantiscus' Latin Letters from 1537: Critical Edition, Methodological Problems*]. She was a technical researcher at the Laboratory for Editing Greek and Latin Sources at the Institute of Classical Studies in 1992–2000. In 2001 she began working at OBTA, then IBI AL, and currently is an assistant professor at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales." She heads the Laboratory for Editing Sources. She specializes in Latin palaeography, studies on sources, scientific editing. Her research interests also include Spanish Erasmianism in the light of Ioannes Dantiscus' correspondence, the language and literary apparatus of Latin letters during the Renaissance, and the history of early books and book collections. She runs a large research grant project under the Ministry of Science and Higher Education's National Programme for the Development of Humanities (NPRH). In 1999–2010 she was a member and secretary of the Neo-Latin section of the Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish

Academy of Sciences (KNoKA PAN). She is a member of the Polish Historical Society, the Polish Philological Society (PTF), and the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies. She sings in a choir, practices Chinese martial arts, and enjoys mountain hiking.

**JERZY STYKA** – classical philologist, graduate of the Jagiellonian University. MA degree in Classical Philology (1977) granted on the basis of the thesis entitled: *Funkcja dialogu w strukturze „Satyr” Horacego* [*Function of Dialogue in the Structure of Horace’s “Satires”*] written under the supervision of Professor Stanisław Stabryła. MA degree in Spanish Philology (1980) granted on the basis of the thesis entitled: *La función del mito odisiaco en la literatura española del siglo XX*, written under the supervision of Professor Piotr Sawicki. In 1984 awarded the title of PhD at the JU’s Faculty of Philology, based on the dissertation *Literatura grecka w krytycznej ocenie autorów rzymskich epoki augustowskiej oraz I i II wieku cesarstwa* [*Greek Literature in the Critical Assessment of Roman Authors of the Augustan Age and the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Century of the Empire*], the supervisor of which was Professor Stanisław Stabryła. In 1994, conferred a post-doctoral degree (“habilitacja”) at the Faculty of Philology of the Jagiellonian University, on the basis of the dissertation *Studia na literaturę rzymską okresu republikańskiego. Estetyka satyry republikańskiej. Estetyka neoteryków* [*Studies on Roman Literature of the Republican Period. Aesthetics of Republican Satire. Aesthetics of Neoterics*] (published by Wydawnictwo UJ, 1994). Awarded the academic title of professor in 1997. Published five academic monographs and numerous articles on classical theory of literature, literary aesthetics, and culture of the late Roman Antiquity. Editor-in-chief of “Classica Cracoviensia.” Head of the Institute of Classical Studies at the Jagiellonian University (since 2012, first and subsequent terms in the years: 1996–1999, 2002–2008, previously – Deputy Head: 1994–1996), and Head of the Chair of Latin Philology at the JU’s Institute of Classical Studies (since 2007). Former academic secretary of the Commission on Classical Philology of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (PAU, 1995-2000); Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Philology of the Jagiellonian University (1999–2000);

Deputy President (1998–2000; 2005–2012) and President (2001–2005) of the Polish Philological Society (PTF). Since 2012, Deputy Chairperson of the Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences (KNoKA PAN). In 1999, performed the function of visiting professor and, in the years 2000–2001, acted as full professor of Latin Philology at the University in Basel. Since 2001, visiting professor at OBTA/IBI AL/FAL and, between 2004 and 2013, Head of the Mediterranean Studies. In 2003 awarded the Golden Merit Cross.

**ROBERT A. SUCHARSKI** – classical philologist, linguist, mycenaologist. Deputy Dean for Student Affairs at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales” at the University of Warsaw. Graduate of the Institute of Classical Studies of the UW’s Faculty of Polish Studies. MA degree obtained on the basis of the thesis entitled *Nonnos z Panopolis i jego „Parafraza Ewangelii wg Św. Jana”* [*Nonnus of Panopolis and His “Paraphrase of the Gospel of John”*], in 1992. In 1998 obtained the title of PhD based on the dissertation written under the supervision of Professor Oktawiusz Jurewicz: *Posejdon w świetle tekstów tabliczek w greckim piśmie linearnym B* [*Poseidon as Presented in the Texts of Tablets Written in Greek Linear B*] (printed by KNoKA PAN, 2000) at the Faculty of Polish Studies of the University of Warsaw. Passed postdoctoral examination (“habilitacja”) in 2006, at the UW’s Faculty of Polish Studies, on the basis of the dissertation *Aegaeo-Graeca. Ku problemowi greckiej ciągłości kulturowej* [*Aegaeo-Graeca. Towards the Problem of Greek Cultural Continuity*] (published by OBTA–Wydawnictwo DiG, 2005). Former lecturer (1992–1998) and assistant professor (1998–2001) at the Institute of Classical Studies and at OBTA/IBI AL (2001–2009). Since 2009, he has performed the function of associate professor at the University of Warsaw, IBI AL/FAL. Owing to the scholarship granted by the European Commission within the scope of the Tempus programme, he studied at Università degli Studi di Bari (1990/1991) and served an internship at Université de Genève (1993/1994). As a holder of the scholarship awarded by the Greek Government, he participated in the Summer School of Greek Culture and Language at the University of Patras (Πανεπιστήμιο Πατρών, 1998). Member of the Polish Philological Society

(PTF), worked at the organization of the Latin Language Contest for high school students. In the years 1999–2009, he was an executive officer and, since 2010 has performed the function of programme director of the East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH)/East-European School in the Humanities (MSH EW). Since 1999 – secretary, director and, then, associate provost of the “*Artes Liberales*” Institute Foundation (FIAL).

**WITOLD WOŁODKIEWICZ** – lawyer, specialist in Roman law, graduate of the Faculty of Law of the University of Warsaw (MA in 1952). Postgraduate studies at the Istituto Universitario di Studi Europei in Turin (1958). Completed legal (attorney) apprenticeship – final exam passed in 1961. As a scholarship holder, he stayed in Rome (1966) and Paris (1976). In 1961, he obtained the title of PhD on the basis of the dissertation entitled: *Stanowisko prawne mater familias w prawie rzymskim* [*Legal Status of Mater Familias in Roman Law*]. In 1968, conferred a post-doctoral degree (“habilitacja”) on the basis of the monograph: *Obligaciones ex variis causarum figuris. Studia nad źródłami zobowiązań w rzymskim prawie prywatnym* [*Obligaciones ex variis causarum figuris. Studies on the Sources of Liabilities in Roman Private Law*] at the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Warsaw. Granted the academic title of professor in 1988. Performed various academic functions at the Faculty of Law and Administration of the University of Warsaw (Deputy Dean, Head of the Institute of History of Law, Chairperson of the Academic Council of the Institute). In 2000 moved to OBTA, where he acted as the Deputy Head and Chairperson of the Academic Council. Initiator and manager of the International School of Roman Law (MSPR) at East-Central European School in the Humanities (MSH)/East-European School in the Humanities (MSH EW). In the years 2003-2007, Rector of the European School of Law and Administration (EWSP) in Warsaw. Since 2008, Head of the Chair of Roman Law at the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences at the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (SWPS) in Warsaw. As invited professor, he held lectures at various universities abroad (among others, one-year series of lectures at Università di Camerino, 1983; one-semester cycle of lectures at L'École Pratique des Hautes Études, IV Section Sorbonne,



*Notes on Contributors*

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1991; many a time at Università degli Studi di Napoli “Federico II”). Member of the Warsaw Scientific Society (TNW) and Academia Pontaniana in Naples; member of editorial councils of Polish and foreign journals (“Palestra,” “Index,” “Iura”). Published more than 200 articles (in Polish, Italian, and French) on Roman law and the history of contemporary legal culture. Decorated with the Commodore’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta (1998) and the “Adwokatura Zasłużonym” [Bar to the Distinguished] (2000) insignia.

## **Regular Employees of OBTA/IBI AL/FAL in the years 1991–2013\***

(This register also comprises part-time employees for periods of several months who were engaged in the realization of specified research and educational projects.)

Maciej Abramowicz	Marek Demiański
Jerzy Axer	Barbara Dębowczyk
Katarzyna Baran	Ivan Dimitrijević
Jerzy Bartmiński	Anna Engelking
Aleksandra Bergier	Piotr Fast
Grzegorz Błachowicz	Taras Finikov
Małgorzata Borowska	Eleonora Gaşiorowska
Andrzej Borowski	Cristina González Caizán
Agnieszka Brylak	Magdalena Gorlińska
Rozalia Budzyńska-Kowalska	Dorota Gostyńska
Tadeusz Bujnicki	Hieronim Grala
Marek Bukszowany	Julita Gredecka
Simon Burton	Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz
Iwona Cechosz-Felczyk	Donald W. Harward
Emilia Ceglarska	Aleksandra Hnatiuk
Łukasz Ceglarski	Natalia Jakowenko
Tomasz Chmielak	Ewa Jakubiec
Michał Choptiany	Marek Janicki
Jan Ciechanowski	Jan Jankowski
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## Antiquity and We at the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition (OBTA)

At the same time, thanks to Professor Kazimierz Kumaniecki and Professor Lidia Winniczuk [...], a certain ideological message got through to us. It was not enunciated explicitly, but rather implicitly. It was the conviction that the reception of ancient tradition was a living part of Polish collective memory and a marker of its transformations; that being aware of that tradition authorized and obliged us to speak and think of Poland and its place within Mediterranean civilization.

Jerzy Axer, from *Antiquity and We – The Perspective of the Period of Transformation*

The Humanities are always about the future of man, which he himself is not able to create without reaching to the resources generated in the past. Interdisciplinarity is getting to know the process in practice. The dialogic character of the Humanities also begins here. As an exercise in dialogue, OBTA perfectly fits my vision of the role that we are to play in society.

Jan Kieniewicz, from *OBTA and Civilizational Studies. Experiences and Prospects*



[...] reception studies view Antiquity as a cultural experience. In consequence, rather than the classical world as such, we examine the images of that world as created in subsequent epochs, in accordance with the assumption that each new deciphering of the classical legacy gives us knowledge about those who make the decoding in the first place. In this way, Classical Antiquity becomes a reference point for generations, societies, and both small and large groups of culture recipients, wherever Mediterranean Civilization has managed to reach. Looking in the mirror of reception, comparing the various reflections and images emerging therein, we can better understand ourselves, others, and foreigners, who in fact cease to be foreigners the moment we realize they are looking in the same mirror. A new world unveils itself before the Humanities and scholarship in general – a world full of challenges and fascinating discoveries...

Katarzyna Marciniak, from the *Introduction*

