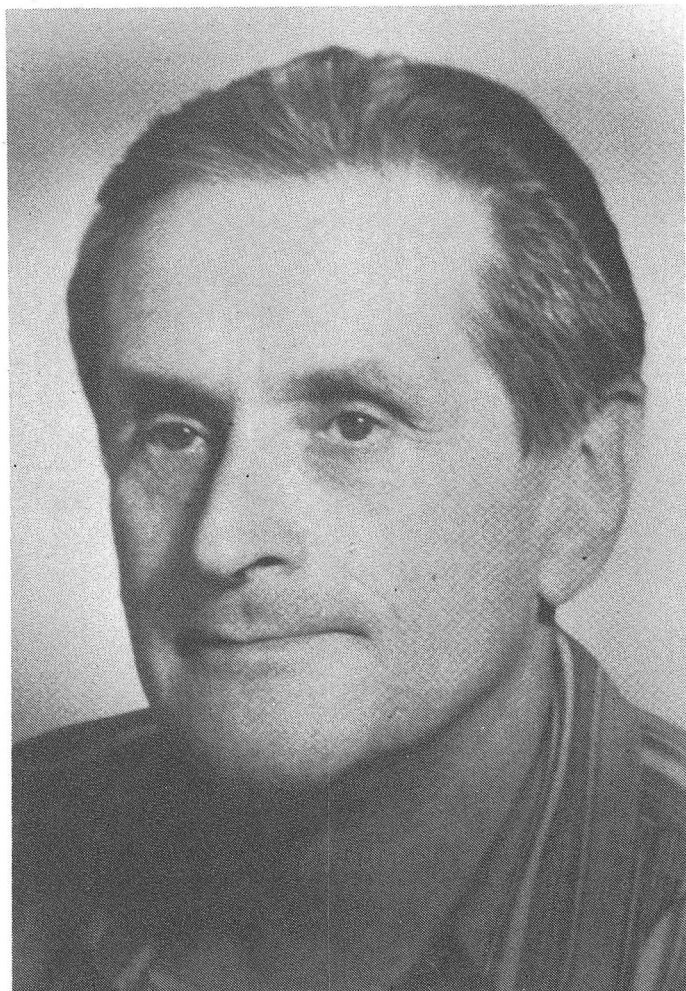




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PROFESSOR ANDRZEJ CZAPKIEWICZ

(1924 - 1990)

On March 1, 1990 Professor Andrzej Czapkiewicz died unexpectedly. That outstanding erudite Polish scholar has been known as a specialist both in Arabic and Semitic linguistics. His untimely death was a painful and irreparable blow to the circles of the orientalists, especially his disciples and co-workers. Andrzej Czapkiewicz was born in Tarnów, on July 3, 1924, in the family of a gymnasium professor. His secondary school education was interrupted by the outbreak of the second world war. Arrested in 1943 by Gestapo for his resistance movement activity he was sent to the concentration camp in Sachsenhausen. After the liberation of the camp by the American forces in 1945 he worked his way to Italy where he joined the Polish Military Forces. In the same year he found himself in England and it was here that he completed the first class of his secondary education. On his return to Poland in 1947 he continued his education in the Nowodworski Secondary School in Kraków, and in 1948 he received his secondary school certificate. In 1948 - 1952 he studied Arabic philology in the Department of Oriental Languages at the Jagiellonian University under the supervision of the distinguished arabist and historian, Professor Tadeusz Lewicki. In 1952 he took up the job of an assistant in the above mentioned Department of Oriental Languages. It was here that he continued his career and received the following degrees: in 1964, after presenting his dissertation entitled "Ancient Egyptian and Coptic Elements in the Toponymy of Contemporary Egypt", he took his doctor's degree. In 1975 having presented the thesis "The Verb in Modern Arabic Dialects as an Exponent of the Development Processes Occurring in Them" he received the degree of doctor habilitatus. His professor nomination came in 1985. In 1976, after the retirement of Professor Lewicki, Andrzej Czapkiewicz assumed the office of the head of the Oriental Languages Department at the

Jagiellonian University. At the same time he held the post of the head of the Arabic Language Department as well as of the Department of Numismatics and Oriental Sources. He actively participated in the research conducted by the latter of the departments, at first showing a great interest in the numismatics and in the 1950s organising a group of researches on Arabic lexicology. One of his most significant contributions when in the capacity of the head of the department was to launch the Japanese language studies /1987/, thus considerably enlarging the range of the oriental studies at the Jagiellonian University.

Professor Andrzej Czapkiewicz attributed a vital importance to the didactic activity. He supervised several doctor dissertations and numerous M.A. theses on the Arabic studies. He also willingly assisted the candidates for the doctor's degree in the cognate fields of knowledge. He was a demanding teacher but at the same time very devoted to his students. It was with the intention to facilitate their studies that he wrote a handbook of the Arabic language and a specimen of the specialistic texts.

The academic research of Professor Czapkiewicz was very well known not only in Poland but also abroad. The professor frequently participated in various conferences, symposia and congresses. He lectured at various universities abroad. He was a member of numerous societies. He participated in the activities of the Philological and the Oriental Studies Committees of Polish Academy of Sciences. He was a member of the presiding board of the Oriental Studies Committee of PAN in Warszawa. He also belonged to the Polish Philological Society and, abroad, to the Middle Eastern Studies Association in New York.

In recognition of his merits in both didactic and research fields he was awarded the highest state prizes /the award of the Ministry of Higher Education, Złoty Krzyż Zasługi (1974) and Krzyż Kawalerski (1983)/. The prize of the Ministry of Municipal Economy was rewarded to him for his cooperation with Polish architects working on the town development project for Baghdad.

On frequent occasions Professor Czapkiewicz was asked for cooperation as a consultant by numerous groups of engineers employed in Arab countries. He was also a co-author of the special invention that allowed to introduce a uniform system of transliteration and to encode information for the data bank recorded in different alphabets (1982).

In the scientific circles Professor Czapkiewicz was known first of all as a distinguished specialist in semitic studies and in Arabic dialectology in particular. These studies embraced both the literary language and dialects which are analyzed in phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical aspects. The broad range of the interests of Professor Czapkiewicz and problems he worked on may be illustrated by the bibliography given below.

Elżbieta Górka

It is difficult to present a complete reflection on him - such a personality evades any stereotypes. Nor can words convey mysteriously hidden pedagogical content of his subtle teaching.

If you talk of the message of the late Professor, you must use the economy of expression so peculiar to him, speak in the tone harmonizing with the cheerfulness of his soul which, however, concealed his peaceful, philosophical pessimism.

Constant inner mobilization, almost ascetic self-control, all lead to treat each exam as an exercise to overcome hardships of life. Excess of fantasia excludes sufficient precondition, which is a logically cohesive argument to justify a thesis. Only thoughtlessness is unpardonable: "nature has predestined amoeba to this". Distance towards the world and its authorities, distance towards your own self enables a proper perception of things. Deliberation and awareness of human limits will help you to find your way leading to the joy of discernment of Master Eckhart.

Jolanta Bubka