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Introduction

The theme of this volume is “tradition” versus “reception” in classical studies. It is a volume conceived out of the need to delineate the difference between those terms frequently and often interchangeably used. The authors attempted to capture the two ideas “in action,” as they emerge in history, as a way of imbuing the cultural models of diverse peoples with Greco-Roman style and inspiration. The contributors to the present volume did not limit their research to practices and ambitions of elites, but, as in the case of Paweł Madejski in “Latin in the Contemporary Polish ‘Street Epigraphy’,” they literally chased pavements looking for evidence of Latin being absorbed and digested by the lowest cultural strata. Madejski finds graffiti, tatoos, written signs on the streets, in which allusion to classical languages, often unintentionally distorted or travestied, forms the heart of a meaning. Lucyna Kostuch and Beata Wojciechowska present a different reading of the volume’s topic: “The Oath in the Ancient and Medieval Culture” is an outline of the history of the oath seen as a social institution from its ancient beginnings to medieval concepts and practices. Agnieszka Bartnik in “Textaufnahme der antiken Autoren im mittelalterlichen Irland. Problemeinleitung” sheds light on how cultural filters work, and she effectively demonstrates that the output of that process are the texts that tend not to mirror the original, but appeal to the public communicating in their own language. Through the examples and notes on those examples she demonstrates the decisive role of language in community building. The following four studies: “Laurentius Corvinus’ *Carminum structura...*” by Anna Szczepaniak, “Horatian Metrics in the Latin Odes of Jan Kochanowski...” by Aleksandra Łambucka, “Genology Games with Tradition...” by Monika Szczot and “*Lizystrata* dla dekadencckiej epoki [*Lysistrata* for a Decadent Epoch]” by Olga Śmiechowicz – raise the issue of how Polish writers modelled the language they used while incorporating into Polish literary culture ancient poetry

in its various aspects. Texts on modern media, that is World Wide Web as an object of foremost and uppermost concern, close the volume. Konrad Dominas in “Mechanisms of Ancient Literature Reception in Digital Media...” deals with the problem of how digital advertisement and search engines steer, direct and limit the broad public’s interest in themes linked with Greco-Roman world, while Patrycja Matusiak in “*Hannibal Goes to Rome* as an Example of How Antiquity is Received in New Media” covers the field of the Internet comics projects. Finally, Katarzyna Kołakowska in “*Poetics* by Aristotle versus Dogme 95...” veers towards a more traditional medium, that is film.

The authors did not deem important to verbalize theoretical answers to the question what qualities the presence of ancient motifs in other languages, cultures and epochs may be described with, so they did not form a precise opinion whether the ancient paradigms were taken in without reshaping their content and meaning or whether the recipients while *re-reading* the message *re-modelled* its meaning. In other words, which of the two patterns of cultural continuity seems more plausible: the tradition interpreted as a *transition* of the unchanged heritage into the new hands or a *reception*, which presupposes an impact of the audience on the legacy they are in charge of as co-authors. Nonetheless, after having finished reading all the articles, one is persuaded to presume that the latter, hermeneutical, option seems to better express intuitions of the writers. So the concept of ancient tradition as a socio-cultural institution can be accurately defined as a play with the past that is being intermittently re-modeled and enriched. To put it simply, a tradition is a reception.

Tomasz Sapota

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