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Professor Dariusz Brodka – In Memoriam



Professor Dariusz Brodka (1969–2024)

Professor Dariusz Brodka was a man of great talent, enormous diligence and self-discipline; the combination of scientific passion and inquisitiveness turned very quickly a brilliant student into a young extremely promising doctor, and within just a few years he was rightly recognised as a fully mature scholar and authority in the field of research on

Late Antiquity and early Byzantium. Already the first monograph published by Prof. Brodka: *Die Romideologie in der römischen Literatur der Spätantike* (Frankfurt am Main 1998), introduced him to the group of recognised specialists in this field, and each subsequent publication strengthened his position in the scientific world. There were many such publications. His monographs were published in prestigious foreign publishing houses, and articles – in the best periodicals from Poland and the world.

After the first book, further excellent works were published regularly: *Die Geschichtsphilosophie in der spätantiken Historiographie. Studien zu Prokopios von Kaisareia, Agathias von Myrina und Theophylaktos Simokattes* (Frankfurt am Main 2004), *Ammianus Marcellinus. Studien zum Geschichtsdenken im 4. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Kraków 2009), *Narses. Politik, Krieg und Historiographie* (Berlin 2018), *Prokop von Cesarea* (Hildesheim–Zurich–New York 2022). Prof. Brodka's status as one of the best experts on Procopius' works was confirmed by an invitation to the team preparing the publication of Brill's *A Companion to Procopius of Caesarea*, in which Prof. Brodka is the author of the chapter 'Procopius as historiographer' (Leiden–Boston 2022). Prof. Brodka was also one of the authors of the Latin-Polish Dictionary edited by Prof. Józef Korpanty as well as a member of the team of translators and commentators of *Justinian's Digesta*. The 2-volume annotated Polish translation of *The Wars* of Procopius of Caesarea (vol. 1 – 2013, vol. 2 – 2015) is undoubtedly the greatest individual achievement of Prof. Brodka as a translator and commentator.

Scientific successes were reflected in a brilliant career: in 1997 Prof. Brodka got his PhD; in 2005 he became a habilitated doctor and in 2017 he received a fully deserved title: the Professor of humanities. Prof. Brodka actively participated in scientific life as a member of the Polish Philological Association, the Commission of Byzantine Studies of the Polish Historical Society, and the Classical Philology Committee of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was elected to the Science Committee of Ancient Culture of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences for a new term. Prof. Brodka also took responsibility for the work of our Institute, first as its deputy director in the years 2005–2012 and from 2020 as its director. Colleagues from all over Poland send

words of sympathy and condolences (Gdańsk, Wrocław, Łódź, Toruń, Warszawa).

Prof. Brodka combined enormous knowledge and scientific passion with teaching talent; he conveyed enthusiasm for learning and research to students; under his direction many great diploma theses were written, on the level of the master's degree and doctorate. His knowledge and abilities as a lecturer were also appreciated by other universities than ours: he was invited to cooperation by the Institute of Classical Philology of the University of Warsaw, where he conducted classes for several years, as well as by the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, where he received a guest professorship in 2011/2012. His former colleagues from the Institute of Classical Philology of the University of Warsaw are saddened by his passing; they remember him not only as an excellent lecturer but also as an unusually nice and well-liked colleague.

It must be emphasized here that spectacular successes, recognition and respect of the environment did not change his way of being in the slightest: Prof. Brodka remain this nice, modest and down-to-earth person, whom we met many years ago. Not only his appearance did not changed (he always looked more like a student or postgraduate student of our institute than a serious professor and, ultimately, the institute's boss), but above all his personality remained the same: he never manifested any hint of self-celebration or expanded seriousness. That is why we all loved and respected him. Prof. Brodka showed that one can combine real authority and directness in contacts with people. He had a very caring attitude towards students and since he became the director of our institute, he extended this protectiveness to all of us. Throughout his life, Prof. Brodka was an example of perseverance and diligence, and for the last dozen or so months showed what true fortitude and courage mean. A disease may have weakened his body, but for any moment it did not break his will to live and act: he worked intensively as a scientist and enjoyed conducting classes as well as conversations and discussions with students; he did not neglect even the smallest administrative questions.

The world of research and science absorbed him and gave him respite. The sciences of antiquity owe him a lot. There is no serious

researcher of Late Antiquity, who would not know his works. His name has been permanently recorded in the history of research. However, the awareness of loss is overwhelming because Prof. Brodka would never rest on his laurels; he continued working, for he simply loved his work.

We mourn not only an outstanding scientist, we mourn our Friend, Colleague and Teacher. It was a privilege to know, work with and learn from someone so wise over the years, it was an even greater privilege to be called his friends.