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In memoriam Hanna Geremek (1930-2004)

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IN MEMORIAM HANNA GEREMEK
(1930–2004)

HANNA GEREMEK was an outstanding Polish papyrologist. She studied history in Warsaw specialising in antiquity (BA 1953, MA 1955, PhD 1967) under the tutorship of an eminent historian and papyrologist, Iza Biezuńska-Małowist (1917–1995). One year after completion in 1955 of her master thesis on Brutus conjuration, which was published as a separate paper, she started working at the Institute of History of Warsaw University, first as an assistant and later as an assistant professor. In the years 1979–1982, Hanna Geremek worked as a keeper of manuscripts and antique books at the Warsaw University Library.

Already in the early years of her scientific formation she had chance to get in contact with the international scholarship. She spent four years in Paris (1962–1965), where she was able to attend seminars in papyrology, conducted by Professors André Bataille and Roger Rémondon at the Sorbonne. Much later, in 1983, she passed some time at Dumbarton Oaks (Washington D.C.) In 1985, she was a visiting scholar at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris and at Columbia University in 1990.

Hanna Geremek published her works in this *Journal* and in other classical periodicals. Her research was marked by broadness of interests – from *gê dêmosia* to Italian wines in Egypt (“*P. Iandana* 99: Italian Wines in Egypt”, *JJP* 16–17 [1971], pp. 159–171). One of her most outstanding achievements was her PhD thesis – a study on the rural community of

Roman Karanis (*Karanis, communauté rurale de l'Égypte romaine*, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków 1969, *Archiwum Filologiczne* 17). It has come to be a work of reference on rural communities of Roman Egypt. In addition to her research, she was also a translator of books into Polish and a prolific reviewer.

In later years the focus of her interest was urban élites of Roman and Byzantine Egypt (except Alexandria). She published an important article on *politeuomenoi* (“Les ‘politeuomenoi’ égyptiens sont-ils identiques aux ‘bouleutai’”?), *Anagennesis* 1 [1981], pp. 231–247).

Even though Hanna Geremek taught at the Institutes of History and of Classical Philology of Warsaw University, she often conducted her research work at the Institute (later Department) of Papyrology, where she came to use the library and to discuss professional matters. The rooms occupied by Warsaw papyrology are small but have a special atmosphere that they owe, perhaps, to their extraordinary past.

Those who had the privilege of meeting her know well that Hanna Geremek was an irresistibly charming person. The visits she paid to the Papyrology rooms always brought a touch of *élégance* and the inspiring freshness of her approach to many problems, as well as to the world in general. We always enjoyed discussing with her matters reaching beyond papyrology, especially that Hanna’s husband was one of the leading figures of the Polish struggle for liberty in late 70s and in the 80s. Though she obtained one-year fellowship in Dumbarton Oaks, she only spent four months there, as she felt obliged to stand by her husband during his imprisonment. (After 1989, Professor Bronisław Geremek became a leading statesman of the democratic Poland.)

In later years Hanna Geremek’s professional interest was concentrated on a figure almost forgotten outside Poland and Russia nowadays, but previously considered the most eminent Polish classical scholar – Tadeusz Zieliński (1859–1944). This Polish nobleman was born near Kiev (then in the Ukrainian part of the empire of the Czars). He was educated in Germany in the times of Wilamowitz and became a protagonist of Russian classical scholarship and an excellent writer of Russian language. Hanna Geremek was particularly interested in the last years of his Russian period (the years 1917–1922). She became fascinated with the way

the sixty years-old intellectual tried to cope with the challenges of the republican *coup d'état* of February/March 1917 and then with the Bolshevik revolution. Finally, Zieliński came to Poland upon the invitation of the Warsaw University and taught in Warsaw between the two wars. His university apartment, by the way, was located exactly in the rooms now used by the Department of Papyrology. Due to the damage brought about by the bombardments of 1939, Zieliński's flat became uninhabitable. After the war, the building was completely restored and changed its purpose, hosting – among other units – the Institute of Papyrology founded by Raphael Taubenschlag. However, Zieliński's spirit is still present in his former apartment, where Hanna Geremek so often came to work.

In 1999 Hanna Geremek published an interesting collection of Zieliński's unknown or little-known political writings of 1917–1922 (Tadeusz Zieliński, *Kultura i rewolucja*, Warszawa 1999). Originally published in Russian, these texts appeared in a Polish translation in Hanna Geremek's edition. They portray the great classical scholar as a witness of the revolution, a democrat, a social and political thinker and, last but not least, as a superb journalist and polemist. Further study on Zieliński's life and an edition of his unpublished memoirs was planned. All those ambitious projects, however, extinguished when Hanna Geremek passed away.

In the last years, her visits to Zieliński's former flat at the University became rare. Now, it is difficult to imagine that she is no more. The Warsaw papyrologists will never forget her.

{*Adam Łukaszewicz*}