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From the Editors

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

FROM THE EDITORS

2008 MARKS THE FIFTIETH anniversary of the death of Rafał Taubenschlag. He was the scholar who notwithstanding the adversities of the war-time and his precarious position of an immigrant conceived the idea of a journal devoted to legal and papyrological studies, one of the main-streams of papyrology in the early twentieth century. Taubenschlag's *opus magnum*, *The Law of the Graeco-Roman Egypt in the Light of Papyri* still remains the standard reference work of the discipline. The complexity of this book, a true reference book rather than an essay, and a certain wariness towards legal studies as such – present among other branches of ancient history – have created a picture of juristic papyrology as a hermetic and extremely difficult discipline. As a result, Taubenschlag's works are often used as the ultimate source of knowledge, without their necessary critical appraisal in the view not only of the new documents yielded since the fifties but, above all, of the important changes in the methodology of the legal-historical sciences. Meanwhile, the number of the juristic papyrologists have been steadily decreasing ...

This *Journal* is intended to show that this tendency is reversing. We have decided to collect studies devoted to legal papyrology in the traditional sense, hoping to show how interdisciplinary research using the elements of law sciences may contribute to better understanding of ancient reality.

With great joy we welcome back after fifty years in these pages Taubenschlag's last pupil, unquestionably the greatest living juristic papyrologist, Joseph Méléze Modrzejewski but also a number of scholars who until now have never dedicated studies to this discipline. Let it be a good omen for the fresh beginning!

And so, by this *Journal* we would like to pave way for a new, comprehensive, legal history of Egypt, Ptolemaic, Roman and Byzantine as well as Early Arabic. We do hope than within next years we shall be able to start such an ambitious research and instructive project.

Symbolically enough, in the year of the fiftieth anniversary of Taubenschlag's death we bid farewell to Anna Świderek (Świderkówna). She started her career in the the fifties in the then existing Institute of Papyrology of the University of Warsaw as one of three assistants, while the remaining two were 'juridical' papyrologists, Henryk Kupiszewski and Józef Modrzejewski. When in 1961 the Institute was divided into the two chairs, Świderek took the directorship of the Chair of Papyrology which remained independent research unit for sixteen years until it was included in to the structures of the newly organised Institute of Archaeology in 1977. Anna Świderek was the head of the Department of Papyrology until her retirement in 1995.

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