

EDITORIAL

In the foreword to the first issue of “Sinologia”, which was published in 2014 as the 9th issue of „Roczniki Humanistyczne” („Annals of Arts”), I expressed special thanks and gratitude to Prof. Maria Roman Sławiński. Thanks to his zeal and enthusiasm, new journal appeared in the field of Chinese studies in Poland, a journal intended to ‘complement’ this new field of study established in 2012 at John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. Unfortunately, Prof. Maria Roman Sławiński lived only to see the publication of the first issue of “Sinologia”: he died on 27 November 2014, leaving the development of Sinology studies to those who established it with him and who wish to continue this work regardless of circumstances. Certainly, this is what Prof. Sławiński, our master, friend and a good man, would have wanted.

In such situation the ancient Romans, following Cato the Elder and Cicero, used to rightly exhort and remind themselves that *suum cuique*—“may all get their due.”¹ This sentence also appears at the beginning of Justinian’s *Institutiones*, a famous textbook of the Roman law: “the precepts of law are these: to live honestly, to injure no one, to give each his own.”² I can say with full conviction that Prof. Maria Roman Sławiński obeyed these rules without exception: he was a respectable, honest and extremely sensitive man. He always gave to each their own—to friends as well as to those in need, both in academic/professional and private life. Therefore, it is fitting to give him what is due to him.

¹ This Latin phrase was popularised by the Roman writer, orator, politician and philosopher, Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC) in the dialogues *On the Nature of the Gods* (*De natura deorum*, III, 38) and *On the Ends of Good and Evil* (*De finibus bonorum i malorum*, V, 67).

² *Institutiones*, 1,1,3-4: “iuris praecepta sunt haec: honeste vivere, alterum non laedere, suum cuique tribuere”.

Prof. Sławiński's academic output is impressive³. For most of his life he was associated, often simultaneously, with several institutions: the University of Warsaw, Jagiellonian University, the National Academy of Sciences, and finally with John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, where he established the Department of Sinology. He wrote several books and hundreds of scientific articles. He painted over two hundred oil paintings which were exhibited around the world. He was a world-famous authority in the field of contemporary history of China and Confucianism. Above all, he was a great man, a true humanist who, I believe, "lived according to nature"—*secundum naturam vivere*⁴—as the Stoics once believed. It might have been curiosity or desire to know (as used by Aristotle in the prologue *Metaphysics*), or perhaps, using Plato's ideas, it was *eros* understood as a desire to discover what no one managed to see before, that drew Prof. Sławiński towards the great history and civilisation of the Middle Kingdom. His fascination with China resulted not only in numerous publications but also in many journeys during which he pursued his passion for painting. Thus, not only did he connect intellectual curiosity and activity with the spiritual dimension, but also physically satisfied his desire to explore. In his passion for painting I see, beyond any doubt, serenity which accompanied him every day. In his artworks depicting wonderful landscapes, one can feel authentic warmth emanating from the Artist himself. What is more, these works say a lot about the Artist and his rich spiritual life. Without exaggeration, then, Prof. Sławiński deserves to be called Renaissance man, for he was a gifted humanist who combined his fascination with the ancient East and intellectual effort with love of beauty, constantly looking for means of comprehensive development.

The Latin proverb says: *aut diligendi sunt doctores aut non audiendi* – "teachers are to be loved or not listened to,"⁵ for if the students do not love

³ An extensive bibliography of publications and other academic achievements of Roman Sławiński can be found in: "Wybrane publikacje prof. dr. hab. Romana Sławińskiego", in: *Ex Oriente Lux. Księga pamiątkowa dla Romana Sławińskiego*, ed. HALINA BASZAK-JARON (Kraków: Krakowskie Towarzystwo Edukacyjne – Oficyna Wydawnicza im. Andrzeja Frycza Modrzewskiego, 2005), 325–334.

⁴ For the Stoics "life according to nature" was *modus operandi* and the ultimate end of a sage's happy life. The phrase appears repeatedly in: Cicero's dialogue *On the Nature of the Gods* (*De natura deorum*, e.g. V, 26) and Lucius Annaeus Seneca's letter to Lucilius (*Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, 5,4), treatise *On benefits* (*De beneficiis*, 4, 25) and the dialogue *On the Happy Life* (*De vita beata*, 7,8,2).

⁵ PSEUDO-VARRO, *Sententiae*, 54.

their teacher/master, he will not be an authority for them. For this reason the second issue of “Sinologia” is a tribute to Prof. Maria Roman Sławiński and an expression of our gratitude for his work and service to our University. I am convinced that, in accordance with Horace’s maxim *non omnis moriar* (*I shall not wholly die*)⁶, Prof. Sławiński’s life’s work will long remain in the hearts and minds of students and staff of Sinology studies at KUL. Prof. Sławiński left behind a monument more lasting than bronze and much more significant: generations of sinologists—students and staff—who are eye-witnesses of his deeds. Let us only hope that we will never lack faith and determination to continue the work started by him.

Krzysztof Narecki

⁶ The phrase comes from Horace’s song (*Carmina*, III, 30): “Exegi monumentum aere perennius” — “I have raised a monument more permanent than bronze.”