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From the Editors

The title subject matter of this Issue 27 of our quarterly “Perspectives on Culture” is likely to direct the Reader’s intuition toward philosophical reflection. And rightly so. The basic dictionary definition of “identity” provides one meaning of the term signifying a state of being identical, and further, implies the facts, features, and personal information allowing one to identify a person. However, a deeper, humanistic and social definition refers to the area of self-awareness, but also a sense of unity with the community, and the elements that determine it. These elements are especially culture, values, and finally, the community itself as seen in the metaphysical dimension, i.e., high moral and religious ideals. Two authors—philosophers, Agata Płazińska, and Piotr Duchliński from the Ignatianum University, propose their reflections on the metaphysical and culture-building nature of self-sacrifice as represented by the lives and deaths of Edith Stein and Simone Weil, and the meaning of self-sacrifice in the name of higher values. In our culture, such value might lie in giving one’s life for another human being. It is a kind of sacrifice which can be described as an absolute one. Contrary to the present crisis in metaphysics and axiology, such “absolute acts” are essential and indelible elements of identity in our culture. In the second text, Fr. Mariusz Szram from the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin goes back many centuries, to the time of the Fathers of the Church, to explore the theological reflection on creating a monumental cohesion of Semitic and Hellenic thought, defining the identity of Christianity. Two other interesting analyses in our title section are *Christian Identity of a Teacher of Early Education in the Contemporary World* by Ewelina Kurowicka-Roman (KUL JPPII) and *Shaping the National Identity of the Youth in the Polish Scouting Association (ZHP)* by Kamil Roman (also from the Catholic University of Lublin).

Several interesting articles have been included in our permanent section, "Cross-cultural Management." Michał Szkoła (AIK) examines quite intriguing and original examples of the Seminary of Silesia and the Częstochowa Seminary in Krakow, offering an analysis of the multi-aspect management of these institutions in the context of cross-cultural, political and social conditions. A study by Ewa Kopeć and Artur Wolanin (also from AIK) takes us into the world of today's business strategic alliances, in the highly interesting area of various national airline companies; they indicate how effective, economical and synergistic are such projects in which the companies would not be able to be successful otherwise. Another tandem of authors: Nasri Messarra from the Université Saint-Joseph of Lebanon and Anne Mione of Université de Montpellier, introduce an interesting experiment on the problems of complex relationships and structures in the modern social media.

In the "European Spiritual Heritage" section we offer a very interesting historical-cultural analysis by Krzysztof Koehler of UKSW, *Old Polish Writers and Freedom of Expression. Reconnaissance*. It discusses the title issue as a separate theme picked up by historical Polish writers of the day. Was freedom of expression one of the civil liberties perceived by Polish writers of old, as a characteristic of the political awareness of the old nobility? In the "Spaces of Cyberculture" section, Danuta Smołucha (AIK) draws our attention to the issue of eye-tracking in cultural research. Eye-tracking is a non-standard method that involves tracking the movement of the eye-balls, and the results of the research allow us to precisely indicate what we focus our attention on and what we ignore and miss. It is extremely important for example in studies on advertising and consumer market.

Finally, the "Varia" section includes three further interesting papers: by Małgorzata Rygielska from the University of Silesia in Katowice, "*Dono del sangue*." *The Research by Fabio Dei on the Cultural Conditions of Blood Donation in Italy* in which the author presents the course and results of research on blood donorship in immigrant communities (Romanian and Senegalese), conducted by Fabio Dei, a cultural anthropologist, and his team; Barbara Geneja-Pietrzak (AIK) writes about intriguing, magical-religious manifestations of spruce tree worship in the culture of the Tatra shepherds. Interestingly, the magic associated with the shepherd culture has also been reflected in Polish literature and dialect poetry. Last but not least, Małgorzata Lebda (Pedagogical University of Krakow) proposes a text *Seeing as Action. The Methods of Interpreting Visual Materials on the Example of Photography* which attempts to find an answer to the question of individual ways of looking, analyzing and interpreting.

As always, we wish you a pleasant and useful scientific reading!



Leszek Zinkow—his research interests include comparative culture studies, in particular the reception of the heritage of the ancient Middle East (mainly Egypt and its historical and mythological narratives and symbolism). Also deals with travel accounts to oriental destinations (editions of texts), the history of museums and collecting, in addition to the history of contemporary culture, the history and practice of the media, the social history of science, transfers, and cultural innovation. In 2016 he received the Associate Professor degree at the University of Silesia. He also works at the John Paul II Pontifical University. Member of the International Association of Egyptologists (Mainz), Polish Society of Cultural Studies and the Commission of Classical Philology at the Polish Academy of Sciences (Krakow). Deputy editor-in-chief of the “*Perspektywy Kultury*” magazine; editor-in-chief in the years 2013-2016.

