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From the Editors

Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), a pioneer of Eastern Studies in Europe, supplied the European reader with many fundamental works about the Orient, in addition to translations, which are often still valid today. It was he who studied the Rosetta stone and interpreted the correspondence of Timur with the King of France, Charles VI. His accomplishments opened the mysterious and alluring Orient for Europe long before the publication of *Orientalism* (1978), the widely discussed book by Edward W. Said. From our present perspective, the impact of the Orient on the culture of Europe is very obvious. Hence the interest in this issue among the authors of papers contained in this issue of *Perspectives on Culture*, most of whom refer to the main theme, *The Orient: Now and Then*.

Issue 31 of *Perspectives on Culture* contains 16 articles by experts in cultural studies, history, theology, Arab studies, sociology, political science, art history, linguistics and Turkish studies. We are presenting the reader with over a dozen texts presenting, above all, but not only, various aspects of how the Orient was perceived in its broadest sense. Among the articles there are highly detailed studies as well as more general works outlining certain problems and issues.

The issue opens with an article by Leszek Zinkow from the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Culture at the Polish Academy of Sciences, describing the activities of Tadeusz Smoleński (1884–1909), the first Polish Egyptologist, author of extremely valuable coverage of the Middle East. Another text by Ewa Siemienieć-Gołaś (UJ) refers to the figure of another Polish Oriental scholar, Aleksander Chodźko (1804–1891), and his contribution to the popularization of the Turkish language in Europe, especially in France. Leonard C. Chiarelli and Mohammad Mirfakhrai (University of Utah, Salt Lake City) describe the circumstances of the emergence of the Middle East Center at the University of Utah founded in the 1960s by Aziz Suryal Atiya (1898–1988), an Egyptian historian and co-founder of Coptic studies as a branch. The university library bearing his name is the fifth largest institution of its kind in North America. In another article, Sabire Arik, a researcher from the University of Ankara, presents the silhouette of Chaka Bey, the first commander of the Turkish navy, and his

role in the Turkicization of Anatolia after the victory of the Seljuks over the Byzantines at Manzikert (1071). An intriguing subject is presented by Svetlana Bliznyuk (Lomonosov University in Moscow) who, based on a little-known manuscript, made a facial reconstruction of the King of Cyprus and Jerusalem, Hugh IV Lusignan. A cross-sectional analysis of the current discussion about the presence of Catharism in southern France is provided by Piotr Czarnecki (UJ), while Bożena Prochwicz-Studnicka (AIK) proposes a historical-cultural analysis of medieval Arab autobiographies (a continuation from the previous issue of our magazine). Next we offer two texts by researchers of the Middle East: Artur Patek (UJ) touches upon the somewhat forgotten topic of Polish war refugees in Palestine, while Przemysław Osiewicz (UAM) on the basis of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus discusses the example of a country which is not recognized internationally. An interesting look at the reception of the “Arabic” Orient in Polish culture was presented by Mustafa Switat from the University of Warsaw. Then, Krzysztof Bojko (AON, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) highlights relations between Poland and the Mongol Empire and the Golden Horde in 1241–1502. The Oriental part of the issue closes with an article by Agnieszka Tes (AIK), who focused on the issue of spirituality in contemporary abstract paintings in the context of the permeation of Eastern heritage and the Western legacy of abstract painting.

Our permanent *Varia* section offers four very scientifically valuable articles: Monika Stankiewicz-Kopeć (AIK) proposes a text on one of the processes of modernization taking place in Polish rural areas in the first three decades of the Partitions (until 1830) related to the economic activity of the landed gentry. Dariusz Zdziech discusses the processes of sustaining Polish culture by the Polish community in New Zealand after 1945. Piotr Wróbel (UJ) undertakes to present the anthropological-historical problem of the “Alien” in Dubrovnik, discussing this aspect from the 13th to the beginning of the 16th century. The issue closes with a jubilee text by Krzysztof Okoński (UKW) and concerns under-ground literature on top of the question about the presence (or absence) of the memory about the heroes of Polish history—printers, distributors and authors—in popular forms of culture.

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

Łukasz Burkiewicz – Cultural studies scholar, historian, economist of culture, and Assistant Professor at the Institute of Cultural Studies at the Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow. His scholarly interests are related to the cultural history of the Mediterranean region in the Middle Ages and the modern age. He also deals with medieval travels. His research includes issues related to cultural management, marketing, and economics.