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*In memoriam Andrzej Zaborski (1942–2014)*

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## Bibliographical abbreviations used in this volume

- AE* *Annales d'Éthiopie*, Paris 1955ff.
- ÄthFor* Äthiopistische Forschungen, 1–35, ed. by E. HAMMERSCHMIDT, 36–40, ed. by S. UHLIG (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (1–34), 1977–1992; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz (35–40), 1994–1995).
- AethFor* Aethiopistische Forschungen, 41–73, ed. by S. UHLIG (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1998–2011); 74–75, ed. by A. BAUSI and S. UHLIG (*ibid.*, 2011f.); 76ff. ed. by A. BAUSI (*ibid.*, 2012ff.).
- AION* *Annali dell'Università degli studi di Napoli 'L'Orientale'*, Napoli: Università di Napoli 'L'Orientale' (former Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli), 1929ff.
- BSOAS* *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (London, 1917ff.).
- CSCO* Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, 1903ff.
- EAE* S. UHLIG, ed., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, I: A–C; II: D–Ha; III: He–N; in cooperation with A. BAUSI, eds, IV: O–X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010); A. BAUSI in cooperation with S. UHLIG, eds, V: Y–Z, *Supplementa, Addenda et Corrigenda, Maps, Index* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2010, 2014).
- EMML* Ethiopian Manuscript Microfilm Library, Addis Ababa.
- JAH* *The Journal of African History*, Cambridge 1960ff.
- JES* *Journal of Ethiopian Studies*, Addis Ababa 1963ff.
- OrChr* *Oriens Christianus*, Leipzig–Roma–Wiesbaden 1901ff.
- PdP* *La Parola del Passato. Rivista di studi classici*, Napoli 1946ff.
- PICES 8* TADDESE BEYENE, ed., *Proceedings of the Eighth International Conference of Ethiopian Studies, University of Addis Ababa (26–30 November) 1984*, I–II (Addis Ababa: Institute of Ethiopian Studies–Frankfurt am Main: Frobenius Institut, Johann Wolfgang Goethe Universität, 1988–1989).
- PICES 10* C. LEPAGE and É. DELAGE, eds, *Études éthiopiennes: Actes de la X<sup>e</sup> Conférence internationale des études éthiopiennes, Paris, 24–28 août 1988* (Paris: Société française pour les études éthiopiennes, 1994).
- PO* *Patrologia Orientalis*, 1903ff.
- RIÉ* É. BERNAND, A.J. DREWES, and R. SCHNEIDER, *Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite*, I: *Les documents*, II: *Les planches* (Paris: (Académie des inscriptions et belle-lettres) Diffusion de Boccard, 1991).
- RRALm* *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, Roma, 1892ff.
- RSE* *Rassegna di Studi Etiopici*, Roma, 1941–1981, Roma–Napoli, 1983ff.
- SAe* *Scriptores Aethiopici*.

**In memoriam Andrzej Zaborski (1942–2014)**

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Andrzej Zaborski was an eminent Polish academic and scholar best known for his wide-ranging work on Afroasiatic linguistics. His specialisms ranged from Semitic languages, in particular Arabic, to Cushitic languages, but he also taught, researched or wrote on other Afroasiatic languages, such as Berber, Chadic and Coptic. As a linguist with a deep knowledge of an extensive range of languages and a thorough grasp of linguistic structures, he also had a marked interest in the theory and practice of translation, which he both taught and exercised in his own work, producing a number of translations from Arabic. It would not be inappropriate to regard him as something of a 'renaissance' linguist whose intellect and interests were confined neither to one area of expertise nor to one language. To the ethiopianist, however, his name will be mostly familiar from his work on Cushitic linguistics, especially on issues of classification and a comparative nature.

Born on October 7, 1942 in Cracow, the son of Roman Zaborski and Bolesława Zaborska, he remained throughout his life strongly attached to the city and its area. He received both his school and university education in the city, entering the Department of Oriental Philology of the Jagiellonian University of Cracow in 1960, where he studied Arabic, Semitic and African linguistics, graduating in 1965 with an MA diploma with a thesis on *The mediaeval history of the Beja tribes according to Arabic sources*. Whilst employed as an assistant in the same department, later to become the Institute of Oriental Philology, he received his doctorate in 1969 with the thesis *Biconsonantal verbal roots in Semitic*, written under the supervision of the great Polish linguist, Jerzy Kuryłowicz. Following a period as a postdoctoral student at the Institute of Arabic Language of the University of Cairo, at the beginning of 1976 he obtained his 'habilitation' back at the Jagiellonian University on the basis of his first book *The Verb in Cushitic*, which had been published the preceding year. This was, incidentally, the first 'habilitation' or advanced doctorate in the world granted in the field of Afroasiatic linguistics. Two years later Zaborski received the post of associate professor at his old university, where he continued to teach Arabic and Semitic linguistics. Though he went on to hold posts there till retirement, becoming Professor Extraordinarius in 1989 and Professor Ordinarius in 2000, Zaborski did not, however, remain in Cracow all the time but obtained a number of foreign scholarships and later, visiting professorships, first in Syria in 1978–79 then in 1982 in Algeria and later, as visiting professor, at

the Institute of African Studies in Vienna in 1982–1983, where he taught Somali and Oromo. This trend continued in subsequent years, which allowed him to travel widely between European universities and network directly with European colleagues, particularly when he won a Humboldt Foundation scholarship, which took him first to the University of Cologne in 1984 and again in 1985 and during the latter stay also to the University of Heidelberg. Having received a second ‘habilitation’ from the University of Vienna in 1984, he started giving regular lectures there on a range of languages, including Somali, Oromo, Amharic, Beḡa, and Tuareg. Zaborski’s indefatigable energy and scholarly drive also led him to undertake original fieldwork on Dahalo in Kenya in 1984, followed in 1989 by fieldwork on Beḡa, Nubian and other languages of the Sudan in Khartoum, Port Sudan and Kassala. His association with foreign universities included visiting professorships at the Istituto dei Studi Orientali, Turin (1986), the University of Udine (1987), the Institute of Advanced Studies of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1990–1991), and the Seminar für Orientalistik, Mainz (2000–2001), as well as a continuing association with the Institut für Orientalistik, Vienna, until 1999. Outlining these numerous academic positions gives an indication of the recognition Zaborski was already receiving as a scholar of international reputation. At home in Poland he was recognized for his work when he was elected president of the Commission Orientaliste of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Cracow) in 1997, as well as vice-president of the Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Warsaw) in 2002 and again in 2007–2010. The role he played in the establishment of Oriental Studies in Poland should not be underestimated. Through his wide experience and knowledge of Semitic and other Afroasiatic languages, Zaborski was able to establish together with his colleague, Joachim Śliwa, an orientalist institution in Cracow on a par with other European universities, in itself no mean feat given the situation of Poland without established research resources in this field.

Andrzej Zaborski was an avid attendee of academic conferences and congresses, and whenever he had the opportunity at overseas gatherings he would collect for himself and above all for his home institution books, off-prints and especially photocopies of orientalist materials that were not readily available in Poland. For many years his home institution did not, of course, have the means to assemble a well-stocked library in his field, but Zaborski saw it as his duty to rectify the situation as much as possible. I remember his shipping home from the year spent as a member of the Jerusalem research team on ‘Living Semitic languages and Comparative Semitics’ box-loads of books bought in Israel and photocopies of materials from the rich libraries of Jerusalem and Tel-Aviv Universities many times larger than

his own personal luggage. As a result, many rooms in his house in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, some 40 km southwest of Cracow, are lined from floor to ceiling with books and boxes of offprints and photocopies.

Zaborski was a tireless and erudite writer, producing six books, including *The Verb in Cushitic* (1975), *The Morphology of Nominal Plural in the Cushitic Languages* (1986) and *Handbook of the Oromo Language* (with Muhammad Ali, 1990), and above all, almost 200 articles and shorter pieces in fields ranging from general questions of Afroasiatic linguistics to specifically Cushitic and Semitic Studies; from aspects of individual languages or groups of languages such as Beġa, ʿAfar, Somali, Bilin, Omotic and Ometo, Chadic and Berber, and of course Arabic, both the Classical and modern varieties, to questions of internal classification and the concept of Ethiopian language areas. Nor should we overlook his publications on the history of the Beġa and the Tigre, nor indeed around ten articles on the theory of translation and around fifteen on the history of Oriental and African Studies. He wrote in English, French, German, Italian and of course Polish. He was in addition a meticulous, expert reviewer, at times highly critical but always unbiased and erudite. Reviewing was a task to which he brought what a colleague once called his ‘faultless and thorough understanding of language, ... reaching the deepest level of meaning’ (Polański 2012).

Another important aspect of Zaborski’s academic activities was his editorship of the journal *Folia Orientalia*, published by the Oriental Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences (Cracow) and founded by his teacher Tadeusz Lewicki in 1959 and of which Zaborski subsequently became editor-in-chief. In 2012 the journal dedicated its forty-ninth volume to him in celebration of his seventieth birthday, where a comprehensive bibliography of his publications up to that date can be found.

On a personal note, throughout the almost forty years since I first got to know Andrzej Zaborski he became both a friend and a colleague in the at first small, but now ever-growing field of Cushitic and Afroasiatic linguistics, who was always ready and happy to exchange ideas and views. It is difficult to single out just one or two of his published works that have been especially influential in the ethiopianist field, but his ideas on the relative chronology of the verbal systems in various Cushitic languages can be mentioned in this context. The ideas that originally appeared in his book *The Verb in Cushitic* were later developed and expanded in a number of articles, sometimes disagreeing with colleagues in details of interpretation. For instance, aside from the obvious example of Beġa, he also saw the verbal systems of ʿAfar and Saho as evidence of notably archaic Cushitic languages, especially in the greater occurrence of prefix-inflecting verbs than, for example, in Somali and its closest relatives. On one point in particular he re-

mained somewhat at variance with the majority of ethiopianist linguists, namely in resisting the trend to see Omotic as a separate branch of Afroasiatic from Cushitic. In 2014 he continued to write of Omotic as ‘enigmatic’, repeating that Fleming’s and Bender’s hypothesis of Omotic as a separate branch of Afroasiatic is ‘quite premature and very weak’. In the same review article of Frajzyngier and Shay’s *The Afroasiatic Languages*, he repeated what were in his view the still unaddressed questions whether the ‘so-called Omotic’ languages are indeed interrelated, whether they are Afroasiatic at all, or whether they comprise groups of separate languages which may be Afroasiatic, and last but not least whether the putative Afroasiatic members are indeed simply a branch of Cushitic, returning to the old classification of ‘West Cushitic’. Whatever one’s own view may be, we should be grateful to Zaborski for persisting throughout his career in pushing these pertinent questions.

Andrzej Zaborski was an exceptional scholar, energetic and tireless in his research, astute and sometimes challenging in his scholarly opinions, firmly grounded in a deep and broad knowledge and understanding of actual languages and not just theories about languages. He will be sorely missed by his students and the wider community of ethiopianist linguists. Away from academic life, he was passionate about the history of the city of his birth, Cracow, and the historic town of Kalwaria Zebrzydowska where he made his home. He was also a keen yachtsman and master mariner. Andrzej Zaborski died on October 1, 2014 following an unexpected illness, just a few days short of his seventy second birthday and one year after retirement. He is survived by his wife Maria and son Krzysztof.

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