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Professor Barbara Bogołębska An Outstanding Academic, a Wonderful Human Being

For every domain of science, luminaries play a special role. They are the role models of the environments, not only within their specific sciences. Such a distinguished personality was Barbara Stanisława Bogołębska (née Rózga), head of the Chair of Journalist and Social Communication, University of Lodz. Always cheerful, full of energy, devoted to her academic, teaching, and administrative work, she continuously motivated others to act and develop. A critical observer of public life, especially of culture, broadly-understood. An avid traveller, always sensitive to the beauty of the surrounding world. She has always been ready to talk about her hobbies, to share anecdotes from her foreign travels, and photographs of nature, architecture, and elements of customs. Her travels are her life, which is why she is constantly planning on discovering new places, even the most remote ones...

Professor Bogołębska was born in Łódź on 13 November 1948. Her parents came from the Kielce region. After some post-WWII wanderings, they settled in Łódź. Her father worked in the chemical industry, her mother in a nursery.

When she was very young, Barbara Bogołębska became fascinated with literature.¹ Her first major reads included *The Six Bullerby Children*, *Karolcia*, H.C. Andersen's *Fairy Tales*, and Amicis' *Heart*. Currently, she has a considerable book collection, though often, due to lack of shelf room, she donates volumes to Łódź libraries. Books are still the type of present she appreciates the most. She shared her passion for books with her parents and sister. Her father, as she reminisced in an interview in *Dziennik Łódzki*, "literally died with a book

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¹ J. Leszczyńska, "Trudna walka misji z wytwórczością", *Dziennik Łódzki*. *The Times* 2013, 11.01, p. 13.

in his hand [...] My mother lamented the fact that she could not read due to her deteriorating vision.”²

In 1966, the future professor graduated from Adam Mickiewicz 19th High School in Wólczńska St. in Łódź, and she began her studies at the University of Lodz. Her choice of her educational path was influenced by Halina Ulińska, her Polish teacher (collaborating with the University of Lodz) because professor Bogołębska hesitated over whether to study chemistry or Polish studies. She acquired her master’s degree in 1971. Her supervisor was Professor Teresa Cieślikowska, who was later also the supervisor of her doctoral thesis and the reviewer of her habilitation dissertation.

Having completed her studies, Barbara Bogołębska worked as a Polish teacher. She became a lecturer in the Department of Literary Education and Polish Language on 1 November 1975. One of her most fortuitous experiences, as she often emphasised, was her meeting Professor Stefania Skwarczyńska, an outstanding literary historian and theoretician, who had a huge influence of Professor Bogołębska’s academic growth.

She devoted her research papers in that period to school stylistics and literary genealogy. She presented the results of her studies in six academic publications and was the author of six and co-author of eleven entries in the 1981 *Przewodnik po tematach i literaturze z dydaktyki języka polskiego* [Guide to the themes and literature in teaching Polish] edited by Eugeniusz Cyniak. Her dissertation entitled *Nauka stylistyki w szkole średniej w latach 1900–1939 na podstawie podręczników z teorii literatury* [Teaching stylistics in high school in 1900–1939 based on the handbooks for literary theory], which she defended in 1981, became the basis for awarding her a doctoral degree.

After that she published thirty-four articles regarding teaching stylistics in high schools, the notion of stylistics in education in the interwar period, the research problems in Soviet stylistics, and the rhetorical; concepts of style. She also actively participated in the activities of the university by, e.g. heading the Department of Literary Education and Polish Language (1992–1993).

In the autumn of 1997, on the basis of the resolution of the Faculty of Philology of the University of Lodz, Barbara Bogołębska received the degree of doctor habilitatus in humanities based on the dissertation *Tradycje retoryczne w stylistyce polskiej. Narodziny dyscypliny* [Rhetoric traditions in Polish stylistics. The birth of the discipline]. The crowning moment of her academic career was the awarding of the title of professor on 30 December 2015 based on the publication *Retoryka, genealogia i stylistyka tekstów literackich i dziennikarskich* [Rhetoric, genealogy and stylistics of literary and journalistic texts].

When working at the university, she applied her organisational talent to creating a new unit at the Faculty of Philology: the Department of Journalism (2002),

2 Ibid.

which on 1 September 2007 was transformed into the Chair of Journalism and Social Communication. She prepared the curricula of first and second-degree study courses together with Professor Grażyna Habrajska, the head of the Department of Linguistic Communication (today: Department of Communicational Theory and Practice at the Chair of Journalism and Social Communication). Thus formed a community of researchers focussing on various aspects of media, journalistic and communication activities.

Professor Bogołębska always put all her heart into her teaching and organisational activities, she was devoted to the team's affairs, she was our guide through the intricacies of academic life, and she helped in everything: from writing class drafts to correcting academic findings. She was also interested in our private lives, and without a moment's hesitation she helped us if we had any problems. Throughout the years she has supported the growing self-reliance of her collaborators without ever limiting anyone's academic interests. She has encouraged us to travel and consult with specialists from other research centres on academic matters. Professor Bogołębska's outstanding sensitivity to the slightest instances of injustice was the reason why anyone suffering harm could have counted on her selfless aid and support.



Photo Professor Bogołębska during the academic conference dedicated to Professor Konrad W. Tatarowski (Łódź 2018)

Photo by Agnieszka Barczyk-Sitkowska.

Research work, academic activities

Apart from the functions related to teaching and being the Chair's manager, Barbara Bogołębska conducts interdisciplinary academic research in literary science (contemporary literature, literary stylistics, rhetoric, teaching literature), rhetoric of the media, journalistic stylistics, media stylistics, and media studies (press journalism, journalistic genealogy). Moreover, she studies the utilisation of rhetorical tools and the rhetorical method of text analysis in the studies into the media genre, the application of rhetorical progymnasmata in modern communication, and the relationship between rhetoric and teaching Polish studies.

She is the author of several hundred publications³ and seven books: *Tradycja retoryczne w stylistyce polskiej. Narodziny dyscypliny* (Łódź 1996), *Studia o stylistyce i retoryce* (Zgierz 2001), *Między literaturą i publicystyką* (Łódź 2006), *Konteksty stylistyczne i retoryczne* (Łódź 2006), *Od tradycji do nowatorstwa, od transgresji do adaptacji na wybranych przykładach literackich i publicystycznych* (Łódź 2013), *Retoryka, genologia i stylistyka tekstów literackich i dziennikarskich* (Łódź 2015), and *Współczesne gatunki i style wobec tradycji retorycznej* (Łódź 2018).

In the book *Między literaturą a publicystyką* [Between literature and journalism], she discussed various research approaches and currents. The publication emphasises the phenomenon of elevating the value of journalistic genres and the popularity of autobiographical writings. In the analysed culture texts, one can clearly see the typically modernist manner of shaping an utterance: playing with conventions and intertextual references for inventive, dispositional and elocutionary purposes. The analysed texts came from various spheres: high art, middlebrow culture and popular culture, and cover many areas of communication. The author also included her remarks on the stylistics and rhetoric of titles and the functions they fulfil.

In *Konteksty stylistyczne i retoryczne* [Stylistic and rhetorical contexts], Barbara Bogołębska engaged in a discussion of stylistics and rhetoric, and their relations within the historical and contemporary dimensions. The structure of the discipline and its contexts became the focus of her research. That interdisciplinary collection of studies had a dual significance: pertaining to material and research, and to theory and methodology. The book also includes some teaching-related contexts.

The aim of *Od tradycji do nowatorstwa, od transgresji do adaptacji na wybranych przykładach literackich i publicystycznych* [From tradition to innovation, from transgression to adaptation on selected examples from literature and the press] was to indicate the problems related to the notions indicated in the title, to find the various phenomena which are involved in the creative process, which converts, transforms and enriches pieces of information, as well as the attempts at combining and synthesising them. The author indicated that the discussed phenomena

³ Vide *Bibliography of the works by Profesor Barbary Bogołębskiej* in this volume.

may offer various perspectives both in reference to low culture (mass, popular, pop culture) and high culture (artistic).

The research discussed in *Retoryka, genealogia i stylistyka tekstów literackich i dziennikarskich* [Rhetoric, genealogy and the style of literary and journalistic texts] stemmed from classic rhetorical exercises, the application and development of which constitute literary and journalistic content viewed within the dimensions of genealogy and stylistics. The discussions applied to historical and contemporary notions, and textual analyses applied both to theory and practice. The studies discussed in the publication focussed on the relationships between journalism and literature, and studies into the persuasive power of rhetorical writing devices, particularly in *non-fiction*.

Barbara Bogołębska is the co-editor of eight volumes devoted to journalistic texts, Łódź-based media, the notions of style and discourse within the media context, and theological, philosophical and cultural issues. The final of the listed areas is related to Professor Bogołębska's activities as the manager of Ośrodek Badawczy Myśli Chrześcijańskiej (Centre for Christian Thought Study) of the University of Lodz, within which she organised meetings and debates with renowned specialists in Christian thought, theologians, and journalists. In her studies, she has also written on Christianity, cultural contexts which indicate the dialogue between the Church and the world of culture, papal thought, ecumenism, the theology of beauty and spirituality, Christian inspirations in literature, and religious discourse.

Professor Bogołębska is a member of: Łódzkie Towarzystwo Naukowe (Łódź Scientific Society), Polskie Towarzystwo Retoryczne (Polish Rhetoric Society), and Towarzystwo Miłośników Języka Polskiego (Polish Language Enthusiasts Society); she works in the Stylistics Commission of PAS, the Teaching Commission of PAS, and the Commission of the Culture of the Spoken Word PAS. She is a member of the Policy Councils of the *Forum Artis Rhetoricae* quarterly, the *Media – Kultura – Społeczeństwo* yearly, and *Notatnik Multimedialny*. She collaborates with the university in Usti nad Labem.

For a decade (2003–2013) she was the editor of the *Acta Universitatis Lodziensis. Folia Litteraria Polonica* yearly (now a quarterly) of the University of Lodz, where at the beginning of her work she established a section on journalism, the media, and communication. Since 2011, those topics constitute separate issues of the journal.⁴

Professor Bogołębska also participated in many national and international conferences. Moreover, she co-organised many conferences held at the University of Lodz, e.g. *Retoryka i jej dziennikarsko-medialne zastosowania* (2015), *Stylistyka mediów* (2016), and *Media regionalne – informacyjność, opiniotwórczość, lokalność* (2018).

4 Vide M. Worsowicz, *Dziennikarskie numery kwartalnika „Acta Universitatis Lodziensis. Folia Litteraria Polonica” – zawartość i problemy metodologiczne* [in print].

She also received many awards and distinctions in recognition of her activities: The Golden Badge of the University of Lodz, Złoty Krzyż Zasługi, National Education Commission medal, *Uniwersytet Łódzki w służbie społeczeństwu i nauce* medal, 13 awards of the Chancellor of the University of Lodz (e.g. a 1st degree team award for the *Wypowiedź dziennikarska. Teoria i praktyka* teaching script [together with Andrzej Kudra], a 2nd degree team award for the *Retoryka i jej zastosowania. Podręcznik dla studentów dziennikarstwa i innych kierunków humanistycznych* academic handbook [together with Monika Worsowicz]).

She has always been positively disposed towards young people, and she has always treated them kindly, though expecting much of them. In her work, she was strongly engaged in teaching, which resulted in the promotion of fourteen doctors, one hundred and seventy masters and one hundred and twenty-seven bachelors.

In 2018, Barbara Bogołębska was the supervisor of the *honoris causa* doctorate of the University of Lodz awarded to fr. Adam Boniecki for his “achievements in journalism, and his attitude and personal charisma which evoked appreciation of his wisdom and care for the homeland and fellow citizens.”⁵

She has also displayed a great deal of devotion to her cooperation with the local media and the journalistic community. She has often invited the editors of various mass media to talk to students on the intricacies of the profession.

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The excellence of the researcher and the academic teacher has been visible not only in her academic works she published and the lectures she delivered, but also in the testimonies of her collaborators who mentioned qualities which cannot be found in academic publications. As the years go by the team of the Chair takes on new graduates from the most recent years. They are successful researchers, and they make great progress in their academic careers, still drawing inspiration from the achievements of Barbara Bogołębska. One can only hope that once she concludes her professional life, she will observe with satisfaction as her collaborators and students continue her path of extending research and teaching young people.

5 *Książd Adam Boniecki doktorem honoris causa*, <https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/ksiazd-adam-boniecki-doktorem-honoris-causa-152106> [accessed on: 13.06.2018]. Vide *Książd redaktor doktorem honoris causa Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego*, <http://kronika.uni.lodz.pl/numery/kronika-3-18/artykuly/1147/ksiazd-redaktor-doktorem-honoris-causa-uniwersytetu-lodzkiego> [accessed on: 13.06.2018].

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