

Gościwił Malinowski, *Hellenopolonica. Miniatury z dziejów polsko-greckich* [Hellenopolonica. Miniatures from the Polish-Greek History]. Wrocław: Instytut Studiów Klasycznych, Śródziemnomorskich i Orientalnych, Uniwersytet Wrocławski, 2019, 770 pages, ISBN 978-83-66240-06-3.

Hellenopolonica, a project headed by Professor Malinowski, historian and specialist in Classical Philology at the University of Wrocław, was launched under the terms of the National Programme of the Humanities Development grant (grant Narodowego Programu Rozwoju Humanistyki).

A large quantity of content more or less concerning Polish-Greek relations or contacts including relevant audiovisual links has been stored at the web cloud <http://hellenopolonica.blogspot.com/>. On the whole the project represents a mosaic of well-sourced information providing perfect material for further research as it is.

The blog has been growing, given the fact that the first piece was published on 10 March 2014 and the latest is dated 19 March 2021. Surely, between 2017 and 2021 there is a gap which is most probably due to the preparation of the international conference held in early November 2018 in Wrocław: '1018–2018: A millennium of Polish-Greek diplomatic contacts. 1000 years of Greeks in Poland'¹ and to the preparation of the monograph based on the project: *Hellenopolonica. Miniatury z dziejów polsko-greckich* [Hellenopolonica. Miniatures from the Polish-Greek History], published in 2020 (dated 2019). Sadly enough, the author of this review has found out about the Polish colleagues' project only very recently which just illustrates how our cross-border academic relations work.

G. Malinowski's book, a follow-up, not a copy of the *hellenopolonica* blogspot, presents a reader-friendly account of direct and indirect historical relations between the Polish and Greek world. The almost 800-page four-pound hardback volume contains a number of color illustrations. In the center of the light blue front cover there is a picture of a marble Ionic column topped by a Polish National Guard officer red cap fitted with a peacock feather. The title *Hellenopolonica* is written in red and white. Quite obviously, the overall color scheme of the volume is inspired by the national colors of Greece, that is white and light blue, and those of Poland, that is white and red.

Quite evidently, the book comprises interdisciplinary approaches (archeology, genetics, philology and others), which can be seen outright when looking at the titles of particular chapters or the elaborate index, the bibliography and the audiovisual links at the end of each chapter. The list of these links provides a massive information basis compiled by Professor Malinowski and his collaborators for years, giving an account of Greek-Polish relations approached from the perspective of various fields either as a major focus or as a minor topic.

The linear, systematic presentation reads quite well and features a single hand, unique style, as opposed to collective monographs that appear more and more frequently. The concise chapters, each covering on average five pages, always refer to Poland at the end. G. Malinowski starts with "zero" chapters about travels connecting the ancient Hellas with the modern Polish territory and then begins his saga literally from Adam. (For

¹ See <http://hellenopolonica.blogspot.com/2018/02/1018-2018-millennium-of-polish-greek.html> [access 14 October 2021]. Proceedings are about to be published.

Greek and Polish offspring of the mitochondrial Eve and Y-chromosomal Adam see Chapter 1.5. [p. 32–38].) As a historian and specialist in Classical Philology he manages to approach the territory from prehistory, ancient history and Byzantine era viewpoint, then goes to outline Greek-Polish relations in the modern era, avoiding too much accent on the exodus of tens of thousands of Greeks emigrating to Communist countries after the civil war in 1948. He brings his survey all the way to our time, that is 2015, when Greece was hit by the economic, political and social crisis, and often became a part of distasteful political campaigns in European countries including Poland.

Malinowski's *Hellenopolonica* aim at the general reading public thus choosing a rather romantic attitude. This excludes any debate on ir/relevance of particular writings or findings included in it. Therefore I cannot judge if – to give a few examples – finding the footprints of so-called Graecopithecus, hominins from Laetoli at the Cretan territory, credited to the team headed by the Polish scholar Gerard D. Gierliński² belongs to the Greek-Polish relations or it is just an extraordinary, universally significant discovery placing the theoretical origin of the common ancestor of humans to Europe (instead of Africa). I am not sure whether the identification of the Polish-born portraitist named Smolki, the author of the allegedly only one existing portrayal of Adamantios Korais, one of the most famous and influential scholars of the Greek Enlightenment (see Chapter 15.114. [p. 412–414]), is relevant to Greek-Polish relations. As regards a common football team line-up both at the league and national level, I can hardly evaluate the significance of participation of Polish players in a Greek team. More examples can be found throughout the whole book. The titles of chapters listed at the end of this paper speak for themselves after all. The author himself closes the book with three chapters. In this original epilogue he refers back to the very beginnings of the research of Greek-Polish relations and to the determination of the particular methodology. He explains the genesis of the project, its limits, and the grounds of naming the monograph *Hellenopolonica* as well as the trickiness of the title. He admits that *Hellenopolonica* sometimes become *Hellenolithuanica* or *Hellenorossica* and that the title is as problematic as the definition of Poland and Polish affairs themselves (see Chapters 00.198.–199. [p. 645–650]).

Even if I cannot assess the book from the point of view of a Polish native speaker and resident, the more I dare to say that the comprehensive monograph *Hellenopolonica. Miniatures from the Polish-Greek History* in its given form translated to a majority language probably would not work. I am afraid that within the context of the Western standard it might be seen as a far-fetched Slavophile effort to seek Greek-Polish relations even where non-Polish viewers find none. Nevertheless, as a non-Polish reader I appreciate especially the well-organized quantity of material, detailed observations, the author's broad-spectrum range, his aiming at objectivity as well as multidisciplinary approach applied with ease and courage. I am convinced that this remarkable work is well worth adapting into a less provocative international format. Thus even a reader not familiar with Polish language and context could profit from the admirable and most inspiring work of (not only) Polish researchers.

² See 'Possible hominin footprints from the late Miocene (c. 5.7 Ma) of Crete?', <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pgeola.2017.07.006> (access 9 July 2021).

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