

POLISH LITERATURE
FOR CHILDREN
& YOUNG ADULTS
INSPIRED BY
CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY



a Catalogue

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WARSAW 2013

Polish Literature for Children & Young Adults Inspired by Classical Antiquity.
A Catalogue

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Zbigniew Karaszewski

Painting on the Cover

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ANNA M. KOMORNICKA

(1920–)



Classical philologist, specialized in Greek comedy and archaic lyric poetry; her research covered also texts of the Greek Fathers, reception of the Bible, genesis and evolution of concepts in ancient literature; translator of Greek and Roman, as well as contemporary literature into Polish; Editor-in-Chief of the classical journal “Meander”; author of books and radio-plays inspired by Antiquity for children and adolescents. Honorary Member of the Scientific Committee on Ancient Culture of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Photograph courtesy of the Author.

Bio by Elżbieta Olechowska, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com.

Komornicka, Anna M., *Stłuczona czara* [Shattered Vase]. Okładka i ilustracje [Cover design and illustrations by] Jerzy Treutler. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, 1975. 37 pp.

Genre: Short story.

Summary: Athens during the times of Socrates. Potter Blepyros dreams that his son Leagros lost at sea fifteen years earlier asks him to make a vase decorated with a painted boy running after a hare, the same Leagros happened to break in the past. A ship arrives in the port of Piraeus carrying slaves, among them, Chryzos, a youth with golden hair. Kinesias, Blepyros younger son, visits the port with a friend; upon hearing the youth sing a Greek song, he stops and talks to him about the beautiful city of Athens. Someone wants to buy Chryzos to work in the mines but Kinesias with his friend convince his uncle Sophron met by chance to pay a bond to the slave merchant and take Chryzos on trial as an apprentice for Blepyros. On the way to Athens, the boys show interesting places and buildings to Chryzos. At the potter's, Chryzos recognizes the vase with the running hare he remembers from his childhood, the song he sang in the port turns out to be the same Kinesias' mother Kleonike sang to his first son lost fifteen years earlier. Chryzos proves to be Leagros, Kinesias' brother and Blepyros' son.

Classical themes: The story, set in 5th century B.C. Athens, presents scenes from everyday life of this period: topography, arts, material culture (pottery, types and decorations), family life, social realities (slavery). The theme of recognition (*anagnorisis*) based on tokens, in this case the painting and the song.



Key words: *Anagnorisis*, Athens, pottery.

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Maciejewska, Anna, *Ad Annam Mariam Komornicka annos ter tricenos complentem*, “Meander” 63, 2008, p. 3.

Perusino, Franca, *Auguri da Urbino. Życzenia z Urbino*, “Meander” 63, 2008, pp. 24–25.

Rybowska, Joanna, *Confessio amicitiae Annae Mariae*, “Meander” 63, 2008, pp. 21–23.

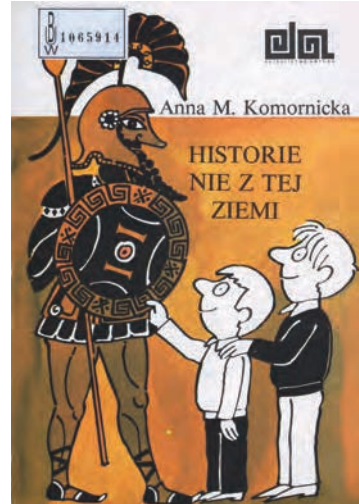
Rybowska, Joanna; Witczak, Krzysztof Tomasz, edd., *In honorem Annae Mariae Komornicka*, *Collectanea Philologica*, vol. 2, Łódź: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 1995.

Starnawski, Jerzy, *O dobrej koleżance. Dostojnej jubilatce na dziewięćdziesięciolecie*, “Meander” 63, 2008, pp. 15–20.

Komornicka, Anna M., *Historie nie z tej ziemi* [Stories Not from This World]. Okładka i ilustracje [Cover design and illustrations by] Jerzy Flisak. Seria: *Dziedzictwo antyku* [Series: The Legacy of Antiquity]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Radia i Telewizji, 1987. 165 pp.

Genre: Collection of short stories.

Summary: This is the first volume in the series *The Legacy of Antiquity*. The heroes of the book are siblings: Krzyś, Stefanek and Elżbietka. They live with their parents and grandmother Bunia. The Mother introduces the kids to the world of myths, telling them about mythological heroes, such as Achilles and Icarus. Children fascinated by these stories give free rein to their fertile imagination and become heroes of seemingly ordinary events during which they meet characters far from the ordinary. They wonder often, if what happened to them, happened really, or if it was just a dream. Each adventure is a great lesson for them, from which they draw conclusions.



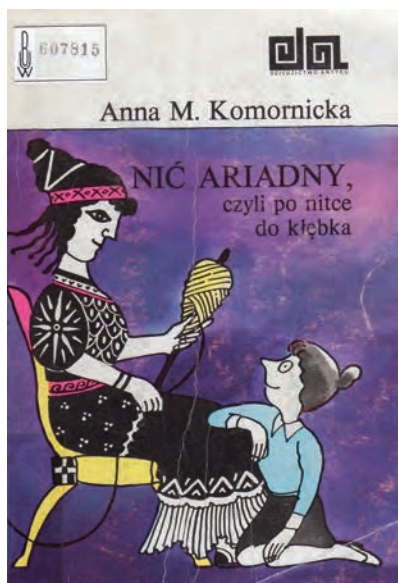
Classical themes: The children's adventures help understand myths about Asclepius, Parcae, Achilles, Icarus, Hermes, Phaeton, Demeter and Kore. The myths provide an explanation of laws governing the world, of superstitions and beliefs of the ancients. The reader learns the meaning and origins of popular expressions (such as “the Achilles' heel” or “in the arms of Morpheus”).

Key words: Greek mythology, ancient history, phraseology based on Antiquity.

Entry by Olga Grabarek, olga.grabarek@student.uw.edu.pl.

Komornicka, Anna M., *Niż Ariadny, czyli po nitce do kłębka* [The Thread of Ariadne, or Finding Your Way]. Okładka i ilustracje [Cover design and illustrations by] Jerzy Flisak. Seria: *Dziedzictwo antyku* [Series: The Legacy of Antiquity]. Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Radia i Telewizji, 1989. 164 pp.

Genre: A modern glossary of classical myths dramatized for children.



Summary: This is the second volume in the series *The Legacy of Antiquity*, where the author explains phrases, sayings, expressions originating from Greek myths, such as “sufferings of Tantalus,” “an apple of discord,” “Trojan Horse,” etc. The author applies a pattern: first, a discussion of the myth at the origin of the term or phrase, then a reflection on the meaning and modern usage of each entry in a dramatized scene with children as characters.

Classical themes: Expressions (e.g. “arrow of Eros,” terror, “the faithful Penelope,” “sardonic laughter”), phrases (e.g. “the wheel of Fortune comes full circle,” “reborn like a Phoenix rising from the ashes”), words (e.g. Olympus, Amazon, Fortuna).

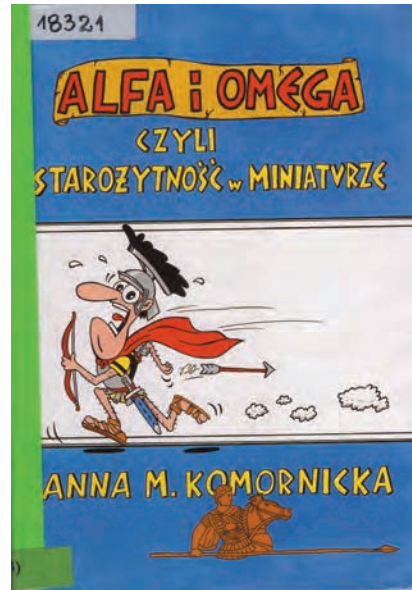
Key words: Greek mythology, ancient history, phraseology based on Antiquity.

Entry by Olga Grabarek, olga.grabarek@student.uw.edu.pl.

Komornicka, Anna M., *Alfa i Omega, czyli starożytność w miniaturze* [Alpha and Omega, or Antiquity Encapsulated]. Okładka i ilustracje [Cover design and illustrations by] Mirosław Andrzejewski. Seria: *Dziedzictwo antyku* [Series: The Legacy of Antiquity]. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Ostoja, 1995. 175 pp.

Genre: A modern glossary of historic ancient phrases dramatized for children.

Summary: This is the last volume in the series *The Legacy of Antiquity*, where the author explains the classical origin of well-known expressions used by famous Greek and Roman leaders, philosophers etc., such as “the die has been cast,” “money does not stink,” or “everything flows.” Other words and expressions, such as “Olympics,” “Spartan upbringing,” originate from cultural traditions and customs of the Antiquity. Phrases related to historical events or figures constitute still another category, e.g. “Pyrrhic victory.” Each explanation follows a similar pattern: the author



presents first historical origins of the expression, and then its contemporary usage. The first phrase is “Alpha and Omega.” The author discusses letters of the Greek alphabet and how it was taught in Antiquity according to Quintilian. The meaning and modern usage of each entry is illustrated in a dramatized scene with three characters, young siblings, Krzyś, Stefanek and Elka. This innovative manner of closing the gap between the far away Antiquity and our times seems particularly effective.

Classical themes: Famous phrases, e.g. “everything flows,” “the die has been cast,” “veni, vidi, vici,” “history is the teacher of life,” “bread and games,”

“You have conquered, o Galilean”; expressions related to ancient history, e.g. “Draconian laws,” “to deliver a philippic”; origins of words, e.g. tyrant, patron, patronage; stereotyped expressions e.g. “the eighth wonder of the world,” “rich as Croesus.” The author explains in a clear way where such expressions come from and what they mean, often quoting ancient historians and famous scholars. The dramatized scenes demonstrate how the classical phrases function in modern language.

Key words: Greek mythology, ancient history, phraseology based on Antiquity.

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Czerwińska, Jadwiga, *Z Grzymałowa w świat antyku*, “Cracovia Leopolis” 43, 2005, pp. 2–5, 51, http://www.cracovia-leopolis.pl/_pdf/22.pdf (accessed 14.01.2012).