

Introduction

The current issue of *Ikonotheke*, which we would like to recommend to our Readers, is truly special. The essays collected herein, although very different in contents and form, have all been inspired by a single intention: they have been conceived as an expression of appreciation and gratitude to Professor Wiesław Juszczak from his disciples and friends. The volume opens with a translation of Professor Juszczak's classic essay on the Romantic theory of the imagination, which we would like to present as a symbolic mirror of the Professor's interpretative method and as a signal of the most important intellectual themes which have constantly been present in his works. The diversity of the essays published in this volume is intended to mirror, as much as it is possible, and to extol the incomparable wealth and unequalled breadth of the Professor's scholarly interests. To all of us, and to a few generations of Polish humanists, Professor Juszczak's scholarly output has been an inexhaustible source of inspiration and a cause of unabated admiration. His works have provided us with an unparalleled model of synthetic thinking and of expressing ideas in a literary form; they have been a lesson on how to masterfully present a penetrating interpretation. In everything that constituted the subject of his reflection – from the Greek myths, ekphrasis and the prehistoric beginnings of art, through the theory and practice of art in the British Isles, the Symbolist art and the Polish Modernist painting, to Martin Heidegger's philosophy of art and the philosophy of music – we discover not only an indelible mark of a true humanist's erudition and sensitivity, but also, perhaps above all, an illuminating aura of creative imagination. In his analyses of works of art, Professor Juszczak not so much discovered the subtlest nuances of their significance and revealed them to his reader, but co-created the mysterious meanings enclosed in them. No-one else but the Professor may be said to be for us a true *mousikós anēr*, in whose thought the boundaries of the arts evaporate to leave a continuity of reflection and imagination, and whose work gives forth the fullness of its harmony like a musical score brought to life by a gesture of an infallible conductor's hand. We declare that his personality makes Professor Juszczak a perfect embodiment of an ideal scholar, a man about whom Novalis once wrote: "Der echte Gelehrte ist der vollständig gebildete Mensch, der allem, was er berührt und tut, eine

wissenschaftliche, idealische, synkretistische Form gibt". We feel honoured and, in fact, favoured by fate to have been granted the privilege of personally knowing Professor Juszcak and of being familiar with his work. We have drawn on the rich resources of his knowledge and we have always relished his good humour and kindness. We are aware that the tribute which this volume is intended to constitute is but an imperfect token of our appreciation of Professor Juszcak's role as our teacher of insight and our guide around the labyrinths of art and history. It will be the highest reward to us if the Professor is kind enough to acknowledge it.

(Translated by Klaudyna Michałowicz)