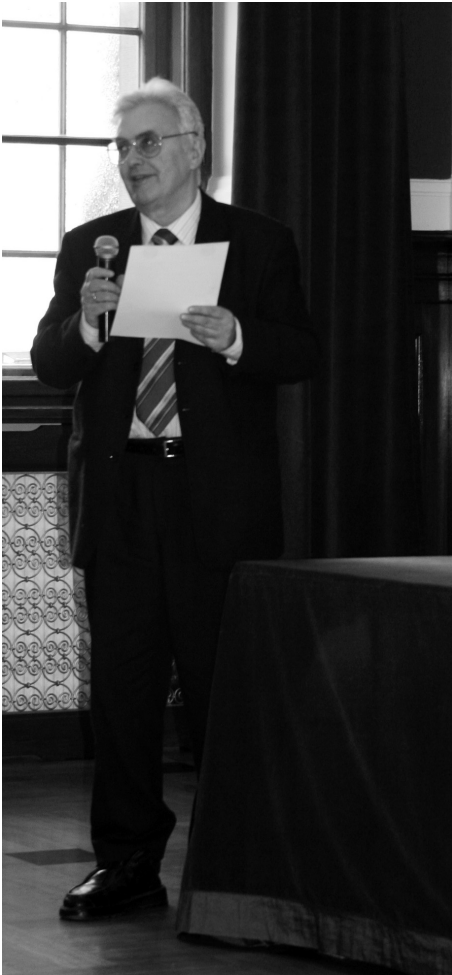


C H R O N I C L E

**Jerzy Kolendo**  
(9 June 1933 – 28 February 2014)



Jerzy Kolendo, a historian, archaeologist, epigraphist and numismatist, died on 28 February 2014 in Warsaw. For over sixty years he conducted interdisciplinary research on the history of ancient Rome and Polish territories in antiquity, on the relations between the Mediterranean world and Barbaricum, and on development of antiquarian studies and growth of interest in antiquities (*antiquitates*) of all kinds, both in Poland and abroad. He chose an innovative way of researching ancient Rome's economy through the prism of social relations. He was an author of a number of works on Polish researchers' contributions to the development of historical sciences, and personally contributed to the development of research on archaeological finds (including numismatic ones) which were only preserved in the form of archival materials (so called library archaeology). He published and commented upon Latin inscriptions found in Polish excavations, his commentaries were also printed in the most important worldwide epigraphic periodical *L'Année Epigraphique*. He dedicated his life to building bridges between history and archaeology and used to teach that not only *Historia magistra vitae*, but also *Vita magistra historiae*.

Jerzy Władysław Kolendo was born on 9 June 1933 in Brest on the Bug. After the untimely death of his father, his mother

who worked as a teacher in a local school, became solely responsible for his upbringing, the intellectual aspect included, and managed to sow a penchant for history and for conducting research even as a child. This was the main reason for Jerzy Kolendo to choose history as his academic department, from which he graduated in the University of Warsaw in 1955 with a work on the rebellions in Gaul in the first century CE, written under the supervision of Iza Biezuńska-Małowist. Shortly after graduation, he found employment in the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences, where he worked until 1971. During that period, he earned several academic degrees. In 1960, in the University of Warsaw, he defended his PhD, *Kolonat w Afryce rzymskiej w I-II wieku i jego geneza / The Colonate in Roman Africa in the 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> Century AD and Its Origins* (published in Warsaw in 1962 and twice in Paris, in 1976 and 1991, as *Le colonat en Afrique sous le Haut-Empire*)<sup>1</sup>. In 1968, he earned a postdoctoral degree with his work *Postęp techniczny a problem siły roboczej w rolnictwie starożytnej Italii / Technological Progress and the Problem of Labour Supply in Agriculture of Ancient Italy* (Wrocław), which was translated into Italian and published in 1980 as *L'agricoltura nell'Italia Romana. Tecniche agrarie e progresso economico dalla tarda repubblica al principato* (Roma, 1980). Agrarian and social subjects remained in his scope of interest throughout his research activity,

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<sup>1</sup> The bibliography of Jerzy Kolendo's works can be found in: P. Dyczek, T. Płóciennik, A. Zawadzka, Bibliografia, *Archeologia* 62-63, 2011-12 [2014], s. 125-145, and its English version in: P. Dyczek, T. Płóciennik, A. Zawadzka, Jerzy Kolendo - bibliography, *Novensia* 25, 2014, pp. 13-51.

inspiring studies on slavery, freedmen and the Gladiator War, and also his work with epigraphic sources.

From 1971 to the day of his death, Jerzy Kolendo was professionally related to the Warsaw University. In 1979, he was awarded the title of professor of humanities and in 1990, the Senate of Warsaw University acknowledged him as a full professor. Between 1971 and 2003, he worked in the Institute of Archaeology of Warsaw University. At that time both his research and teaching focused on the relations between the Mediterranean world and the Barbaricum in light of archaeological finds (the inflow of Roman goods into Polish territory) and written sources. A two-volume academic textbook, *Świat antyczny i Barbarzyńcy. Teksty, zabytki, refleksja nad przeszłością / The Ancient World and the Barbarians. Texts, Artefacts, Reflection on the Past* (Warsaw, 1998) provides an overview of this research. Even in his retirement, Jerzy Kolendo maintained an active relationship with the Institute of Archaeology. He also worked with the Antiquity of Southeastern Europe Research Centre of Warsaw University, which resulted in works on the legionary camp of Novae (Bulgaria), including also publications of the inscriptions found during the site's excavations. In addition, he continued his research into antiquarian studies in the Centre for Studies on the Classical Tradition in Poland and East-Central Europe (OBTA UW) in the very same university. Furthermore, he delivered numerous lectures in foreign universities, including Padua, Strasbourg and Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne where he was repeatedly invited as a visiting professor.

The list of over 650 publications of Jerzy Kolendo is a testimony to his passion for research and astonishing diligence. It includes several books and hundreds of ar-

ticles published in Polish and foreign periodicals, particularly French and Italian. He also was the author of numerous reviews, reports and encyclopaedia entries, and an editor of joint publications.

Jerzy Kolendo's engagement in Polish and foreign academia was an essential aspect of his activity. He was a member of various academic societies in Poland and abroad, sat on editorial boards, and provided reviews for many academic periodicals.

Numismatics was the field where various areas of expertise and scientific interests of Jerzy Kolendo coincided. Among his numismatic achievements one can find publications on coin finds, works focusing on the growth of the general interest in numismatics, historical analyses of the inflow of currency to the territories of the Barbaricum and always questioning and insightful reviews and methodological studies<sup>2</sup>.

The growing interest in numismatics in Poland that was observed since the Renaissance, is described not only in Jerzy Kolendo's works on antiquarian studies, but also in his articles on important Polish collections from the nineteenth century (three consecutive numismatic collections of Warsaw University, each built from the ground up, the collection of the Warsaw Society of Friends of Learning, and the collection of Krzemieniec High School). They provide information not only on great researchers (Jan Chrzyciel Albertrandi, Tadeusz Czacki and Joachim Lelewel), but also forgotten numismatists and unknown antiquity aficionados, interested in coins as souvenirs from the past.

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<sup>2</sup> The bibliography of Jerzy Kolendo's numismatic works was published in: A. Zawadzka, Bibliografia prac numizmatycznych Jerzego Kolendo, *Wiadomości Numizmatyczne* 58, 2014, pp. 323-328.

Jerzy Kolendo gave special attention to the extensive numismatic endeavours of Joachim Lelewel, one of the most prominent Polish historians of the nineteenth century, whose name has become indelibly imprinted in the history of global numismatics development due to his research on the medieval and Celtic aspects of this field conducted during his exile in Brussels. In articles on Lelewel's trailblazing studies on Celtic numismatics, Jerzy Kolendo also provided a detailed account of the rapid growth of interest in numismatics in France, which resulted *e.g.* in the printing of the world's very first periodical dedicated to this field of study, namely *Revue numismatique*. Another exiled Polish researcher whose activities were the subject of Jerzy Kolendo's works was Jacques Malinowski, who was distinguished in the field of Gallo-Roman archaeology, amongst others, for his contributions to the preservation of coin finds.<sup>3</sup>

Studies on numismatic publications and the history of Polish collections were directly linked to Jerzy Kolendo's archaeological interests. His meticulous analyses of old publications and archives helped to extend the register of Roman imports into the Barbaricum by an abundance of new monetary finds, and – through cooperation with numismatists engaged in research on the Middle Ages and modern era: Borys Paszkiewicz and Marta Męcłewska – to introduce previously unknown Polish medieval and modern monetary finds to academic circles.

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<sup>3</sup> The catalogue of ancient coins of the Lot department (Georges Depeyrot, *Les monnaies antiques des départements des Hautes-Pyrénées, de la Haute-Garonne, du Tarn-et-Garonne et du Lot*, Sorèze 1985) registers over 50 coin finds preserved for further research owing to Jacques Malinowski's documentation.

As he repeatedly expressed both in his publications and by the custom of inviting other researchers to work with him, Jerzy Kolendo held a firm belief in the need for interdisciplinary cooperation and exchange of experiences among researchers specialized in different historical periods. He also strongly supported the notion of introducing all types of new research methods into the field of numismatics. He fully appreciated Jerzy Wielowiejski's use of statistical analysis methods during research on representativeness of coin finds, unprecedented in Polish science, and in 1978 he introduced it to his research by committing the statistical analysis of a coin hoard found in Nietulisko Małe to Henryk Rysiewski. He was very enthusiastic about the use of metal detectors in archaeology, as it greatly increased the general amount of numismatic finds acquired in the course of excavation works. He personally adapted the 'library excavations' methodology, previously used by researchers of Mediterranean archaeology and deeply rooted in inscription studies, to serve research on Roman imports into the Barbaricum. This resulted *e.g.* in the identification of a medallion, which had been found in the vicinity of Chocim (today's Khotyn, Ukraine) and stored in Berlin Münzkabinett, as one of the Emperor Gallienus, in the introduction of previously unknown coins found on the Polish territory to academic circles, and in plenty of *addenda* and *corrigenda* to those already present in existing publications on the subject. The initiation of such corrections was vital, since – as Alexander Bursche estimates – in some of the coin find catalogues as much as 30 per cent of all information has been proven to be faulty or inaccurate.

Effecting a change in the attitude of the archaeological and numismatic communi-

ties towards the use of information on coin finds gathered from old publications and archives was by far the biggest contribution of Jerzy Kolendo to the development of Polish numismatics. His model works, the ideas enunciated therein and the consistency in exacting their use in practice has led to the establishment of an obligatory canon of conducting research on coin finds in Polish science that requires using the skills of a historian, archaeologist and numismatist at the same time.

According to this canon, in all scholarly coin catalogues it is now obligatory to also include information on the finds registered only in archives and old publications, as in Polish conditions influenced by occupiers' confiscations and by war damage, it may often be the only remaining evidence of coin finds. This often requires gleaning the data even for accidental references. The resulting information, treated as source information, ought to be quoted *in extenso*, in the original language and should become a subject of thorough primary source analysis. It is vital to determine the extent of its reliability, the identity of the person who documented the find and of their informants, the circumstances in which the coins were found, who studied them and the general character and interests of the source document. In this context, Jerzy Kolendo's works on the history of the development of personal and scholarly interests in numismatics take on an additional importance. The next step in conducting research, he taught, is to create a find's profile in accordance with the current state of knowledge, both numismatic (description of coins according to current standards) and archaeological (field inspection of the coin find's location, establishing the archaeological context and interpretation in light of other coin finds and imports of the given area).

Jerzy Kolendo considered coins to be an especially valuable source of information on relations between the Mediterranean and Barbaricum. The analysis of the uneven (by both chronological and territorial means) distribution of Roman coins found beyond the borders of the empire makes it possible to track some of the political events (especially armed conflicts) known from written sources. In the case of numismatic specimens as exceptional as medallions, even a single find may help in the reconstruction of historical events and processes. Jerzy Kolendo always demanded that the coins were used as clues to historical questions, stressing at the same time the fact that coin finds must be subjected to rigorous source study, and researchers ought to be particularly careful when drawing their conclusions, treating them always as hypothetical. He believed that, in order to understand mechanisms that deform representativeness of coin finds, it is essential to follow the concepts of a 'dead culture', a 'living culture' and a 'retrieved culture,' as delineated by Hans Jürgen Eggers. In the case of the inflow of Roman coins into Polish territories, he distinguished two different historical processes: one in which the coins left the territories of Roman Empire, and the second where they reached out across hundreds of kilometres from the *limes* into our region, with the latter often connected to the redistribution of goods taking place in the Barbaricum (e.g. as a result of wars, matrimonies and exchange of goods).

As a historian using coins as a means to reconstruct relations between the Roman world and the barbarians of Central Europe, Jerzy Kolendo sought to explain the inflow of coins and the way they functioned in the Barbaricum by researching the other, Roman side of the *limes*. He

discussed in detail the issue of buying out captives as one of the sources of Roman coins in the regions north of Danube. He looked into a phenomenon that occurred during the reign of the emperor Septimius Severus, when the inflow of Roman coins to the Barbaricum temporarily ceased, and debunked a theory, popular in academic circles at that time but highly unlikely in light of the realities of the barbarian world, that barbarians refused to accept devaluated denarii. Working on the commentary to the Polish edition of Tacitus' *Germania* he presented a model scrutiny of a famous passage analysed by many historians before him, namely the one concerning the function of Roman coins in the Barbaricum (Tac., *Germ.* 5.3), in the vast context of source studies on this work. It showed in an exemplary manner how we can try to differentiate between the actual information on the realities of the life in Barbaricum and the Roman stereotyped perceptions of the barbarians in order to get a better understanding of the barbarian world.

On the one hand, Jerzy Kolendo used his experience as an epigraphist in numismatic research (see 'library excavations', mentioned above), on the other – he used depictions on the coins minted by Roman emperors for Legio I Italica to interpret an enigmatic inscription *SIGNVM ORIGINIS*, carved on a sculpture's pedestal found in this very legion's camp in Novae. In light of coin iconography, it was possible to determine the most probable hypothesis out of several postulated, which is that the inscription refers to the depiction of the Capitoline Wolf suckling Romulus and Remus.

The great value of most of Jerzy Kolendo's numismatic works lies not only in particular findings, but primarily in the fact that he would describe his whole research

process step by step, essentially instructing the reader how to conduct this kind of study. In his articles, he would always include reflections based on source studies and remarks of a methodological nature. This didactic value along with the model structure made reprints of his articles the basis for the second part of the academic textbook, *Świat antyczny i Barbarzyńcy. Teksty, zabytki, refleksja nad przeszłością [The Ancient World and the Barbarians. Texts, Artefacts, Reflection on the Past] (1998)*, which was published as a third volume in the Series of Textbooks by the Institute of Archaeology of Warsaw University. Out of 20 articles used there, as many as 12 relate to the subject of numismatics. Each of them was revised by the author and annotated according to the current state of knowledge in the section entitled 'Addenda' following every text. The textbook included two articles on numismatics that had never been printed before. An article *O kilku znaleziskach monet rzymskich z ziem Polski [On several Roman coin finds from the Polish lands]*, published in the second volume of *Nowe znalezisk importów rzymskich z ziem Polski [New finds of Roman imports from the Polish lands] (2001)* was yet another example of his highly didactic works. According to Jerzy Kolendo himself, it is a type of 'protocol of the research', which resulted in the introduction of several *addenda* and *corrigenda* to the catalogue of ancient coin finds from Polish territories. Speculations regarding information on Roman coins found in the eighteenth century in Konopnica (Wieluń County) included in this work provide an important lesson

on reliable research and honesty in drawing conclusions. Thorough analysis of the coins did not lead to any unambiguous conclusions, but – as Jerzy Kolendo used to say – 'it is the duty of a researcher to study in detail every source concerning a finding made in unclear circumstances. Better to accept the hypothetical nature of some deductions than to assume but one version without any criticism'.

Along with his research work, another great passion of Jerzy Kolendo was teaching. Among his students, he had numerous numismatists and archaeologists researching Central European Barbaricum and Mediterranean regions. Mariusz Mielczarek, Aleksander Bursche, Piotr Jaworski (whose doctoral dissertations he supervised) as well as Renata Ciołek and Anna Zawadzka all decided to explore the field of numismatics.

In spite of a progressive chronic disease, Jerzy Kolendo heroically continued to undertake his research, even lying in a hospital bed. During that period he had several on-going research projects, he would still see his students, who were looking for advice or approval of their work, and he was writing reviews for academic periodicals. At the time of his death, he was 80 and had planned for further research work. It is not only a great scholar with a huge passion for research that has passed away; it is an 'external ally', who never refused to provide *Wiadomości Numizmatyczne* with help and good advice.

*Anna Zawadzka (Polish version)*  
*(photo Krzysztof Antczak)*