

ORBITUARY

GENOWEFA SADALSKA (1939–2002)



Professor Genowefa Sadalska passed away on 5 July 2002 while still at the height of her creative powers. She died after a lengthy illness, which she confronted with great dignity. Her passing is a painful loss for Scandinavian studies in Poland, in particular Swedish studies. Until the very end, she fulfilled her teaching duties and took active part in the work of the Institute of Linguistics, where she had been employed for the last 4 years of her life.

Professor Sadalska completed her German philology studies in 1962 and subsequently joined the staff of the Chair of Germanic Languages at Adam Mickiewicz University. In 1969, the Chair of Germanic Languages was re-named the Department of West-Germanic Languages and became part of the Institute of Germanic Philology. The same year, within the Institute's structure, the Department of Scandinavian Languages was founded, which in 1974 changed its name to the Department of Scandinavian Studies only to become an independent entity, under the above name, in 1984. At the time of the Department's foundation, Genowefa Sadalska was already its employee and is now counted among its co-creators and co-founders. After the recruitment of first Swedish philology students, she devoted her efforts to the teaching of subjects related to Swedish studies. In 1977, Genowefa Sadalska moved to Jagiellonian University in Cracow where she took on the difficult task of developing the Department of Swedish Philology, which at the time was within the structure of the Institute of Germanic Philology chaired by Professor Aleksander Szulc. In the above Department, Professor Sadalska took on the majority of administrative, organizational and teaching responsibilities. The courses she held there were related to various fields of Swedish linguistics, such as:

1. Descriptive grammar of Swedish
2. Contrastive descriptive phonetics of Swedish
3. Historical grammar of Swedish
4. Contrastive linguistics
5. Master's seminars in the field linguistics and translation

In her academic work, Genowefa Sadalska continued the tradition of the Poznań School of Linguistics created by Ludwik Zabrocki, whose theories she became acquainted with during the course of her German philology studies, and later applied, verified and developed them in her work on historical phonetics of Nordic languages.

Professor Sadalska began her academic work in historical linguistics. In 1962 she wrote her Master's thesis, supervised by Prof. Ludwik Zabrocki, in the field of historical grammar of German, *Historische Betrachtung der Stammsilbenvokale der Iura Pretenorum*. Following Prof. Zabrocki's suggestion, she chose as the subject of her doctoral dissertation *Rozwój konsonantyzmu szwedzkiego z punktu widzenia usilenia – lenicji. Studium porównawcze*. (The development of the Swedish consonant system from the reinforcement – lenition perspective. A comparative study.) Professor Aleksander Szulc, who also had emerged from the Poznań School of Structural Linguistics, became her supervisor. On the basis of the above dissertation, Genowefa Sadalska obtained the title of Doctor of Humanities in the field of Germanic linguistics in 1971. Sadalska's work was the first doctoral dissertation on the history of the Swedish language in Poland. Later, Genowefa Sadalska's academic interests focused on the morphology and syntax of Swedish. Her habilitation, *Tidskategorin i svenskan* (Time category in Swedish) resulted from her teaching experience and needs. On the basis of this work, in 1994, she obtained her postdoctoral degree (habilitation) in the field of Germanic linguistics conferred on her by the Council of the Faculty of Modern Languages and Literature at Jagiellonian University. It was the first habilitation on the Swedish language in Poland. Her academic interests, among others, included:

1. Phonetics and phonology of modern Swedish.
2. Swedish and Polish contrastive phonetics.
3. Grammatical and lexical categories in Swedish.
4. Processes of gramaticalization and lexicalization in Swedish.
5. Historical phonetics of Swedish and Icelandic.
6. Historical morphology and syntax of Swedish.
7. Teaching Swedish (phonetics) as a foreign language.

(For detailed presentation of Prof. Sadalska's academic work – see Bańcerowski, J. (2003): Professor Genowefa Sadalska in the light of her work. *Lingua Posnaniensis* XLV, pp.201-213, and Bańcerowski, J. (2004). Profesor Genowefa Sadalska w świetle swych prac: In memoriam. *Scripta Neophilologica Posnaniensa* VI, pp.73-88).

In this context one should also mention Prof. Sadalska's contribution to the field of translation. She is the co-author of the Polish translation *Persona's* screenplay, a film directed by Ingmar Bergman. The screenplay was first pub-

lished in 1984 by Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe in Warsaw, with later new editions in 1986 and 1987.

Besides her academic research, teaching was Prof. Sadalska's second calling. As a teacher, she was known to be exceptionally demanding. She spared no effort to impart as much knowledge and as many skills to her students as humanly as possible. As an academic researcher, she was remarkably discerning and punctilious.

After 21 years in Cracow, four years before her death, Prof. Sadalska returned to Poznań, not to the Department of Scandinavian Studies, but to the Institute of Linguistics, where she acted as a specialist in Swedish for the new programme of Ethnolinguistics which had been developed in the above Institute. She returned to Poznan with her impressive scholarly expertise, full of hope that she would finally devote herself entirely to scientific research. She left many unfinished projects as the debilitating illness struck her down. With fear and trepidation, we witnessed 18 months of her final battle with the disease. With great awe, we watched her struggle to rise above pain and discouragement. We bid farewell to Professor Sadalska with a feeling of deep grief and sorrow. We do it with a traditional Scandinavian goodbye "Takk for alt" knowing that "non omnis moriar".

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