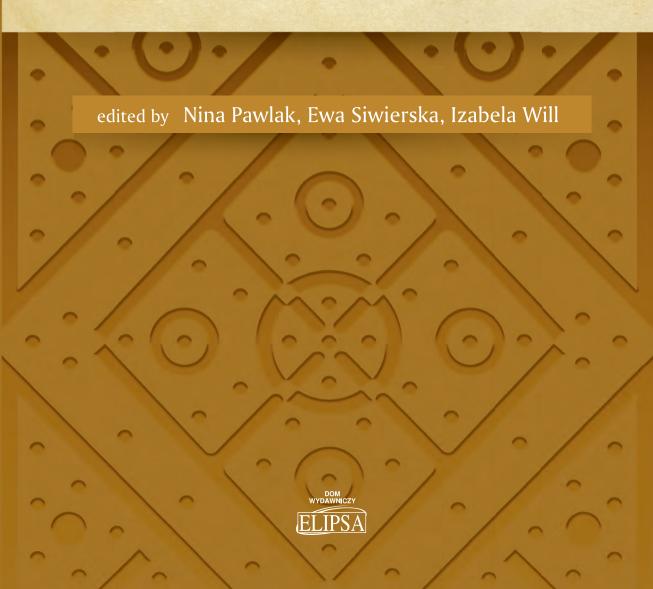
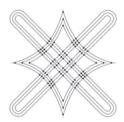
# Hausa and Chadic Studies

in Honour of Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz



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edited by

Nina Pawlak, Ewa Siwierska, Izabela Will



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Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz

### Tabula gratulatoria

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# **Contents**

Editors' preface	9
Eugeniusz RZEWUSKI, Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz. Croquis for a portrait.  On occasion of His 70 <sup>th</sup> birthday	11
Works published by Professor Stanisław PIŁASZEWICZ	21
Theses supervised by Professor Stanisław PIŁASZEWICZ	43
Articles	
Current progress in linguistics	
Ahmad Tela BABA, Hypercorrection in the use of velar ejectives amongst the youths	
in Guddiri Hausa	53
Herrmann JUNGRAITHMAYR, The subjunctive in Mokilko – a mixed perfective-	
-imperfective verb stem.	58
Olga STOLBOVA, Hausa contribution to Chadic database (vocabulary of farming)	67
Andrzej ZABORSKI, Questions of Chadic 'prefix' conjugations and Chado-Afroasiatic ablaut	75
History and language development	
Sergio BALDI, French loans in Hausa	87
Nikolay DOBRONRAVIN, Tackling the publication of <i>ajami</i> manuscripts: A historical	
Hausa poem from Ségou	98
Rudolf LEGER, The 'Urheimat' of the Proto-Afrasian speaking peoples and their early migrations – with specific reference to Chadic speaking groups of the wider Gongola-	
-Benue basin.	122
Robert PIĘTEK, Comments on European knowledge of the African interior in the 16 <sup>th</sup> and 17 <sup>th</sup> centuries.	132

8 Contents

# Language and culture

Philippe CASSUTO, Victor PORKHOMOVSKY, Les noms des parties du corps dans	
les versions haoussa de la Bible	141
Dymitr IBRISZIMOW, Balarabe ZULYADAINI, 'Fathers' and 'mothers' in Hausa from a cognitive semantic point of view	152
Joseph McINTYRE, Teaching Hausa: language(s), culture(s) and the semantics of the	
'grade' system	162
Nina PAWLAK, 'Woman' and 'man' in Hausa language and culture	172
Hafizu Miko YAKASAI, Bodily gestures as negative and emphatic markers in Hausa	188
Literature and culture	
Sabina BRAKONIECKA, The 'Yan Izala movement – its educational and social activity	
in Northern Nigeria	203
Patrycja KOZIEŁ, Hausa women's rights and changing perception of gender in Northern	
Nigeria	215
Mariusz KRAŚNIEWSKI, Could tradition find its niche in popular culture? Characteristic	
features of Hausa oral literature and its possible place in modern reality	230
Ewa SIWIERSKA, Charisma within Islam: Ibrahim Niass in Hausa poetry	246
Izabela WILL, The image of the East in contemporary Hausa novels	259
List of Contributors.	270

# Editor's preface

This volume is dedicated to Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz – a prominent Polish scholar working in the field of African studies. It is a great honour and pleasure for us to mark the occasion of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday with a volume which includes articles focusing on the most spectacular area of his research interests, namely Hausa and Chadic studies. We would like to include the best wishes of the contributors and all of the Professor's colleagues, students and collaborators who have participated in celebrating his work.

The wide range of research carried out by Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz over the course of his academic career finds its manifestation in this volume. His own work, reflected in a long list of publications, was initially based on linguistics and literature. Grounded in philology, with time it gradually extended to include cultural, religious and social issues. The articles of the volume deal with all the topics and research fields that are currently being investigated within Hausa and Chadic studies. The contributions of so many foreign scholars in the Festschrift show that Prof. Piłaszewicz's links with the international scholarly milieu are strong. On the other hand, three generations of the Professor's students who participate in the volume to honour his academic legacy reflect the inspiring impact he had on the young people.

With this celebratory volume, the importance of Hausa studies at the University of Warsaw is also confirmed, both in the field of teaching and in research. The years of Professor Piłaszewicz's headship of the Department of African Languages and Cultures in 1988–2009 are significant in terms of his personal development but also that of the institution. "The golden years" of Hausa studies in Poland were marked by a relatively large number of students learning Hausa, the granting of academic degrees of various levels, and a significant advance in international co-operation in the area of Hausa studies. At that time, many students were able to study Hausa at the universities in Europe and at Bayero University, Kano in Nigeria. Such internalization was also important for the staff members who were able to free themselves from being perceived as scholars from a communist country from behind the iron curtain working in the field of African studies. Thanks to the substantial help of our colleagues from Germany, Italy, France, Great Britain,

10 Editor's preface

and our co-operation with Russian Africanists, the Polish scholars were included into the international network of studies on Hausa language and literature, and – more widely – into Chadic studies. This established the University of Warsaw as one of the strongest centres of Hausa studies in the world.

The volume also acknowledges the 'African' experience of Prof. Piłaszewicz, who has maintained contacts with students and collaborators established at universities in Nigeria. This aspect conforms to the idea of the volume as joining the West, the East and Africa together – here – in Warsaw. This idea is valuable for the development of African (including Hausa) studies in Poland in future decades.

Finally, the Festschrift is a valuable contribution to the development of African studies as a discipline. It combines the achievements of the 'giants' of Chadic studies with the research interests of new generations of scholars, using various kinds of sources, including both African and European, in their studies on African languages, cultures and history. We thank all our Colleagues who have kindly agreed to participate in this volume as Authors. The fact that Professor Piłaszewicz's jubilee has provoked this joint publication is an honour for the academic society of Oriental Studies in Poland and African Studies in particular.

**Editors** 

### Eugeniusz Rzewuski University of Warsaw

# Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz. Croquis for a portrait. On the occasion of His 70<sup>th</sup> birthday

Professor, Renowned *Mallam*, Mentor, Longstanding Former Captain of our Boat "Afrykanistyka" and her Crew. Africanist-cum-Orientalist. Colleague

It is a great privilege for me, a humble peer *mzee*, to present, on the occasion of the Jubilee of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, the academic profile of Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz with an overview of his outstanding achievements. I call it 'croquis for a portrait' – crayon sketches which do not maintain the pretence of being a complete ready entry in a *who's who* type of enumerative text. The lists of his published works and the dissertations he supervised included in this volume form part of the landscape to this portrait, together with what the other Contributors have placed herein on their canvas as a tribute and a token of their affinity. Professor Piłaszewicz's own reflections, formulated and registered on various occasions (Piłaszewicz 2007; 1998; 1984) and recalled in a few instances herewith, will add glaze, density, resolution, light, colours to this as yet incomplete picture, as well as retrospective time and depth.

Mallam Piłaszewicz proves through his own example that within the realm of academia lineages of scholars and kinship-type affinities of ideas exist; that in intellectual cross-fertilization we have multiple ascending and descending kin; that a real authority is never a self-made-man or woman. He is keen to point out who

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Instead of bibliometric methods of measuring impact, such as the citation index and Hirsch index, I favour an <u>academic kinship</u> approach – akin to that proposed by A. Molinié and G. Bodenhausen (2009). They propose the following: "We suggest that the 'fertility' of individual scientists be appreciated in terms of kinship rather than through personalized indices" [Molinié and Bodenhausen 2009: 433]. "New insights could emerge from scientific kinship diagrams, revealing multiple descending and ascending lineages and alliance relationships. Such links of kinship would disclose connections of thought which would enable us to map the network of a scientific field" [Molinié and Bodenhausen 2009: 435].

his masters have been and to pay tribute to them through his own achievements. Like sufi *ulamas* he treasures his *silsila*. In Islam, a *silsila* signifies a chain of spiritual genealogy, linking an individual with his academic masters, directly or through an indirect emanation of their teachings. Frequently, this travels back up to the Prophet.<sup>2</sup> An *ulama*'s identity and maturity, strengthened by divine grace, are legitimized through specific steps of initiation, explicitly confirmed in a *silsila*. As a metaphor for academic kinship, such a *silsila* approach will be further developed in this portrait.

Summarised and expressed in the dry terms of selected bibliographic keywords, Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz's fields of academic activity include: 3 i) the Hausa language, its literature and culture [10], ii) Religions and mythologies in Africa [8], iii) Literatures – written and oral – in other African languages [2], iv) Linguistic diversity in Africa – with special focus on languages of the Chadic group and history of its research [2]. Within each of these four major domains, he has published substantial academic books and many articles resulting from his studies presented in the context of vast amounts of digested literature. 4

The scholarly editing of Hausa manuscripts in adapted Arabic script called ajami<sup>5</sup> were initially his mainstream activity. He became one of the best experts on Hausa literature and, in particular, on Hausa ajami manuscripts, a domain of study he continues to promote through conference papers, as well as by giving lectures and supervising diploma works on the topic. Attaining such a high level requires vast scholarly knowledge of many Islamic and Arabic matters: religion, language, literature, palaeography – in its multiple connectivities to West Africa's past and present. One has to be an Africanist-cum-Orientalist. All his adult and professional life Stanisław Piłaszewicz was and continues to be part of the Faculty of Oriental Studies of the University of Warsaw, initially as a student (1963–1968) at the Department of Semitic Studies – as this part of the Oriental Studies Faculty was then labelled. Soon after his M.A. graduation, in 1968, he was employed as Junior Assistant Lecturer in the same Department, which soon started changing its official names, until it was divided and one part became the Department of African Languages and Cultures. All these accumulated years make for another jubilee of constant engagement – one that could be celebrated as a golden anniversary – which passed unmarked in 2013. Thanks to the founding scholars and their disciples in a chain of at least four generations, half a century of the history of African studies at the Warsaw University was marked by a solid and steady accumulation of knowledge, growing teaching experience, published research results, established

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See example from Mozambique in (Bang 2014: 60ff).

Ordered according to the number [#] of books published in each study domain.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Professor Piłaszewicz, in his own definition of his research fields, does not specify the domains mentioned in iii) and iv), however, he has incontestable merits in exploring and promoting such studies through his publications which have become course-books.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> See Dobronravin (this volume).

and maintained international contacts, and the development of an extensive library. But also by traumatic departures.

Who were Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz's teachers and mentors? For Hausa studies these were Dr Nina Pilszczikowa. Zygmunt Fraizyngier and African language teachers, Odia Omage and Sani Umaru (Oumarou). Methodological seminars were conducted by Professor Stefan Strelcyn – Head of the Department, specialist in the Ethio-Semitic languages Ge'ez and Amharic. Professor Strelcyn, who himself was engaged in studying Ethiopian manuscripts, supervised Piłaszewicz's first (M.A.) thesis.6 In turn, Strelcyn was marked by the aura of being the former student and assistant of the famous Marcel Cohen - French professor of comparative linguistics of the Chamito-Semitic language family, renamed Afro-Asiatic. The merit of direct academic guidance by Professor Witold Tyloch as the supervisor of his doctorate and Head of the Department is constantly acknowledged with respect and gratitude by Stanisław Piłaszewicz. Several other scholars have had a stimulating more or less direct influence on his academic achievements. The publications by Tadeusz Lewicki (1974; 1976), Mervin Hiskett (1975), John Hunwick (1995) have constituted a model for Piłaszewicz and he has perceived their works as an inspiration and felt an affinity to their academic perspectives. He has also emphasized the significance of Professor Herrmann Jungraithmayr as his "long-standing master and well-tried mentor" (Piłaszewicz 2000: 7). And occasionally, in a symbolic dimension, he compares his own life path to that of the first Polish professor of African languages, Roman Stopa.<sup>7</sup>

#### Our Mallam in Africa

For a Polish student or researcher of Africa, from the 1970s to the 1990s, opportunities for fieldwork and becoming immersed in the studied realities were very scarce. Universities had no funds in foreign currencies for costly long-distance travel abroad, internships or courses enabling the polishing of one's competence in an African language. As a positive contrast to this 'normalcy' may serve the famous and very successful Polish archaeological excavation campaigns and conservation works in Egypt (Prof. Kazimierz Michałowski) and in Guinea Conakry (Prof. Władysław Filipowiak). There were also some other exceptions, various windows of opportunity opening unexpectedly in individual cases, such as research grants or team surveys in the form of academic expeditions. Bilateral agreements for academic cooperation signed on an intergovernmental level and/ or between universities of politically allied countries favoured the training of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> 1968, M.A. in African Studies (University of Warsaw): "Historia Wa. Wydanie tekstów hausa w adżami. Opracowanie filologiczne, przekład i komentarz" [History of Wa. Edition of Hausa Texts in *Ajami* – Transliteration and Commentaries]; supervisor: Prof. Stefan Strelcyn.

Stopa, R. 1987, Spod chlopskiej strzechy na katedrę Uniwersytetu [From under a Peasant's Thatched Roof to a University Chair], Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, referred to in (Piłaszewicz 1998: 52).

young Africans in Polish Universities, as well as sending Polish lecturers to some African universities, on a commercial contract basis, and in disciplines defined by the contracting party as a priority for development.

Piłaszewicz's first academic sojourn to the African continent became possible only after he was awarded his doctorate by the University of Warsaw in 1973.8 This year was indeed his *rite-de-passage* in terms of his career. A double one. He received a scholarship from the Ghanaian government for research at the University of Legon on Hausa ajami manuscripts as part of the 'Arabic Collection' (October 1973-June 1974). By then he was already well initiated into the theme. Hausa aiami writings were the subject of his M.A. thesis (1968), which consisted of the scholarly edition of two manuscripts from this Ghanaian collection, received thanks to contacts established there by Zygmunt Frajzyngier, by then himself a Ph.D. student. The core portions of this thesis were published in two articles (Piłaszewicz 1969a; 1969b). Also for his doctoral dissertation Piłaszewicz continued to master the art of critical philological editing of Hausa *ajami* sources for researching the history of West Africa. The eight months spent in Ghana during his quest for interesting manuscript sources turned out to be a very successful mission. He identified the content and form of nearly fifty Hausa ajami manuscript copies kept within that archive.9 He also discovered some thus far academically unknown yet important writings by the Hausa scholar, Alhaji Umaru: "My special attention was drawn to the literary output of Alhaji Umaru (also known as Imam Imoru; full Arabized name: 'Umar ibn Abū Bakr ibn 'Uthmān ibn 'Alī al-Kabbawī al-Kanawī). He was a famous poet, an informant, a Muslim scholar and religious leader, who was born in Kano in 1858, and died at Kete-Krachi (Ghana) in 1934" (Piłaszewicz 2006, see also Piłaszewicz 1998: 80).

Piłaszewicz selected and copied a stock of manuscripts which he and his disciples in Poland could work on for the next three decades. Alhaji Umaru and his intellectual and literary heritage expressed in Hausa and in Arabic became the subject of Piłaszewicz's later post-doc monograph, <sup>10</sup> as well as that of several other articles and finally, as his crowning achievement, the scholarly edition of unpublished Hausa *ajami* texts from the German collection authored or attributed to Alhaji Umaru (Piłaszewicz 2000).

The University of Legon in Ghana and, a decade later, the University of Maiduguri in Nigeria (Borno State, 1994–1995) were two African centres where Stanisław Piłaszewicz became an academic insider – he worked there for significant

<sup>8 1973,</sup> Ph.D. (University of Warsaw): "The Stories of Samori, Babatu and Others. Hausa Manuscript No. 98017 from the School of Oriental and African Studies (London). Edition with Linguistic and Historic Commentaries"; supervisor: Prof. Witold Tyloch

 $<sup>^9</sup>$  He estimated their number as nearly 10% of the whole 'Arabic Collection', amounting to about 500 mss.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> His habilitation thesis (Piłaszewicz 1981) is a study based on six *ajami* manuscripts of poems in Hausa, and on seventeen manuscripts of poems in Arabic – all authored by Alhaji Umaru.

periods, long enough to absorb direct experience, collect data and texts, and establish long-lasting contacts. He also managed to reveal his great skills in training future African scholars and other cadres by conducting lectures for his Maiduguri students on Hausa literature using the Hausa language as his teaching medium! Currently a professor at this University, Nigerian linguist Ahmad Tela Baba, one of Piłaszewicz's former B.A. students recalls the dedication of his Polish professor with gratitude and appreciation, as well as noting the seriousness and clear flow and focus of his lectures, his supportive but demanding attitude towards his students:

The Professor was the most energetic and hardworking ever seen in our lives. [...] He joined the services in Maiduguri in 1984, i.e. in the 1983/84 Academic Session. He completed the supervision of my BA project entitled *Nazari kan Wakokin Hamidu Zungur*, the most voluminous so far in the Dept. of Linguistics. We started with the then Dr. A. Abubakar. [...] Thus, this led to my First Class degree all as a result of the encouragement I received from Prof. Pilaszewicz. [...] He taught me Hausa prose and he was my project supervisor. I know he was hardworking, demanding a lot. When in class he lectures on only relevant and related topic. I was blessed with a First Class degree due to his training. [Ahmad Tela Baba – personal communication].<sup>11</sup>

#### Academic teacher in Warsaw

For over thirty years Stanisław Piłaszewicz has had the status of an 'academically independent' researcher and lecturer: as Associate Professor (Pl. docent), Professor Extraordinary (Pl. nadzwyczajny, 1989), and then the titular Professor Ordinary (Pl. zwyczajny, 1994). During his forty-six years of academic teaching, altogether many hundreds of Warsaw University students have attended his classes. Those on Hausa literature, on African religions, on Islam in Africa, his seminars – have been attended by students, also from other Departments, conscious of the high level of his competence, precision and communication skills. He has supervised fifty-five M.A. theses, five Ph.D. dissertations, and has been the reviewer and examiner of over twenty other doctorates and some *habilitation* dissertations. Out of his Ph.D. disciples in Hausa studies, three Colleagues have continued their academic careers in the same area though in different disciplines: Prof. Nina Pawlak (linguist and current Head of the Department), Ewa Siwierska, Ph.D. (the closest continuator in Hausa textology and studies on West African Islam) and Mariusz Kraśniewski,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Professor Piłaszewicz in turn recognized the qualities of this student by making references to his thesis in the article "The image of temporal world, death and eternal life in Hausa homiletic verse" (Piłaszewicz 1995a).

Ph.D., who does research in the Polish Academy of Sciences on West African slavery and the slave trade using Hausa language sources. However, Stanisław Piłaszewicz will for a long time to come remain a Master and beacon in Polish studies on African languages and cultures. Many books he authored are aimed at a wider public, not only Polish students of African studies for whom these are precious course-books. He prepared a pioneering handbook of Hausa literature – which unfortunately remains little known abroad as it was published only in the Polish language (Piłaszewicz 1983). Nevertheless, another publication co-edited and co-authored by Piłaszewicz on African literatures in African languages, published in 1985 in English simultaneously by two publishing houses, remains until this day an important milestone and compendium on the subject. 12

#### The textologist, translator and interpreter

Translating Hausa texts into Polish used to be a nearly daily activity for Stanisław Piłaszewicz as a teacher of the Hausa language and Hausa literature. In his philological scholarly editions of historical testimonies, philosophical and religious prose and poetry, both Hausa (*ajami* and *boko* – Romanized writing) and Arabic texts, translation (into English in most cases), into a version as close as possible to the original, is always a core component accompanied by critical apparatus and indices. Each text becomes an actual research project aimed at identifying the given social and historical context as well as intertextual connections. The level of Piłaszewicz's investigative precision, treasured by his readers and highlighted by reviewers, is the best example of solid work and of great practical utility. Frajzyngier writes in his review of *Hausa Prose Writings in Ajami by Alhaji Umaru*:

[...] It is the footnotes to the translation pages that provide the most original contribution of the translator. The translation is the part that can be used by historians immediately, i.e. without any elaboration necessary. It provides a wealth of information that otherwise may take a lot of time to collect. This is by far the most valuable part of the book, and Piłaszewicz has rendered the community of historians a great service by making this information available. (Frajzyngier 2004: 536)<sup>13</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> Edited jointly with B.W. Andrzejewski and W. Tyloch (Andrzejewski et al. 1985).

<sup>13</sup> Compare also the conclusion reached by another reviewer, Ewa Siwierska "[...] It provides a major contribution to the studies on social, political and religious history of West Africa as well as on the development of the Hausa people literature in their own language outside their home territories" (Siwierska 2001). Frajzyngier, however, who is of the opinion that the expectations of linguists should be equally well taken care of as a historian's needs, does not feel comfortable with the classical philological way of presenting the original, its transliteration and translation separately, as it does not facilitate simultaneous

Piłaszewicz, seldom albeit with good aesthetic results, has tried his literary skills in translating the texts of traditional and modern Hausa literature out of curiosity and for the pleasure of readers who do not know the language and are not interested in reading scholarly footnotes resulting from translational accuracy. *Wakar damina* ("Song of the Rain"; in Polish "Pieśń o deszczach") by Shaykh Na'ibi Sulaiman Wali (1929–2013) was one of the earliest (Piłaszewicz 1972) challenges he faced, aiming to render the style and rhythm of a poetic text. He has also translated several Hausa folk tales and adapted them for Polish readers. The 2014 publication of his translation of the novel by Sulaiman Ibrahim Katsina "Przyparci do muru" (Piłaszewicz 2014) has been awaiting print for more than fifteen years. Piłaszewicz has also edited and translated a voluminous book authored by Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa. A History of Fifty Years of Independence* from English into Polish (Piłaszewicz 2005).

#### Functions and membership in academic institutions and societies

As stated above, for nearly two academic years, in 1984 and 1985, Stanisław Piłaszewicz lectured at the Nigerian public University of Maiduguri, in the Department of Languages and Linguistics. This was the only period he was simultaneously employed at two academic centres. In 1988, Stanisław Piłaszewicz became the Head of the Department of African Languages and Cultures at the University of Warsaw, leading it for nearly twenty years – until February 2009, when his disciple Prof. Nina Pawlak was elected and appointed his successor.

He was the Director of the Ph.D. programme at the Faculty of Modern Languages (1999–2005) and of the Faculty of Oriental Studies (2005–2012) at the University of Warsaw. At the Polish Academy of Sciences, he is a member of the Committee for Oriental Studies as well as a member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures (formerly the Department of Non-European Countries, now merged and transformed).

Since his student years, he has been a member of the Polish Society of Oriental Studies (founded in 1922). He also belongs to the Polish Association of African

comparison of these three parallel texts and their language analysis. A face-to-face, or interlinear format would better serve the purpose. However, the advantage or justification of the 'classical school' is that for critical apparatus it is more appropriate to separate footnotes attached to a transliterated text than to those of a translated text. One could express regret that a digital critical edition of source texts had not yet become a 'classical' norm.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Most of these were published in (Piłaszewicz 1995b), additionally three of these texts were reprinted in *26 bajek z Afryki, ze zdjęciami Ryszarda Kapuścińskiego* 2007.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> The title of the Hausa original is *Tura ta kai bango* (1983).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> This publication is a wise home-made solution and may be the beginning of a new series. In his 1998 interview, Piłaszewicz complains about the eternal problem with Polish publishing houses, which refuse to publish literary works translated from African languages (Piłaszewicz 1998: 58–59).

Studies of which he was one of the founders in 1990 and its first President (1990–1993). He was a member of the Linguistic Association of Nigeria until its closure in 2002.

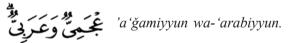
Continuously, since its beginnings as an academic journal, he has run the publishing of the *Studies of the Department of African Languages and Cultures (SDALC)* as its Chief Editor (http://www.sdalc.uw.edu.pl). He is also a member of the Editorial Board of *Hemispheres* and of *Africana Bulletin* (which stopped appearing in 2012).

#### **Awards**

For his academic achievements, Professor Stanisław Piłaszewicz has received many national awards. The most prestigious include the Award from the Minister of Science and Higher Education (granted in 2001) and the Medal of the National Education Commission (granted in the same year: 2001). He has received ten awards for academic achievements granted by the Rector of the University of Warsaw, and five awards from the Rector on the occasion of the successive jubilees of his years of work.

## **Concluding remark**

Surat 41, 'Al-Fussilat', v. 44, of the Quran reflects on a pair of antonymes:



'foreign', 'not our' vs. 'Arab', 'our' which gain here a theological dimension opposing the profane and obscure vs. the sacred and clear. <sup>17</sup> Languages which adopted the Arabic exonym *ajami* have reshaped its use, form and its semantics. The non-Arabic language variations used within the local Islamized community and written in adapted Arabic script thus expressing Islamic culture no longer sound or look foreign, since they have become an Arabized (musta 'arab) idiom and domesticated within this community. However, its 'otherness' never becomes

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Wa-law ğa'alnāhū qur'ānan 'a 'ğamiyyan la-qālū lawlā fuṣṣilat 'āyātuhū 'a 'ğamiyyun wa- 'arabiyyun. 'And if We had made it a non-Arabic Quran, they would have said, "Why are its verses not explained in detail [in our language]? Is it a foreign [recitation] and an Arab [messenger]?"' [The Holy Quran, Al-Fussilat (41): 44]. http://quran.com/41.

In the Polish translation of the Quran by J. Bielawski in [Koran] (1986: 576; 920): A jeśli byśmy go uczynili Koranem w języku wam obcym, to inni by powiedzieli: "Dlaczego jego znaki nie zostały wyjaśnione? Dlaczego obcy, skoro jest arabski?" Thanks are due to Profesor Janusz Danecki for his scientific transcription of the Arabic original above.

fully neutralized for the external surrounding world. The semantic evolution of the word *ajami* is well exemplified by Hegyi who analyzes the phenomenon of *aljamiado* literature produced in Andalusia and Aragon in Mozarabic (Old Southern Iberian Romance) language written in Arabic characters (Hegyi 1983). The Arabic-speaking Morriscos became native speakers of *lengua aljamiada* but in secrecy continued to be attached to Islam and Arabic script.

It is possible to draw a similar parallel in the case of Hausa writings in *ajami*: its cultural content also confirm that the etymologically-motivated opposition 'foreign' vs. 'autochthone' is also not applicable here. Piłaszewicz explains the cultural and religious meanings of these writings, the role of literacy and literary richness, their value as sources for historiography, emphasizing that all this patrimony belongs to world culture. This is exactly the opposite of 'otherness'. Professor Piłaszewicz's entire *oeuvre* consists of showing us that what is foreign does not have to be alien, revealing various forms of expressing idiomaticity and universality.

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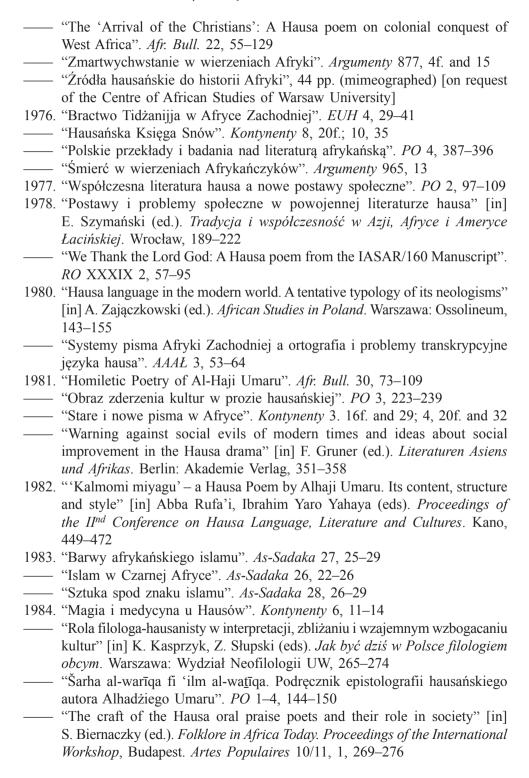
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