

Professor Gyula Wojtilla

THIRTY YEARS IN THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF AOH

Gyula Wojtilla was born in Budapest on 13 June, 1945. Between 1964 and 1969 he studied for an MA degree in history and Indology at the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE, Budapest). Upon receiving his diploma, he worked at the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1970. In 1971 he became a “university doctor of humanities” at ELTE. Between August 1973 and June 1974 he studied with a research scholarship at the Department of Ancient Indian History at Banaras Hindu University, and in 1977 he went on a three-month research tour in India (Delhi, Benares, Calcutta, Madras, Tirupati, Trivandrum). Since 1975 Professor Wojtilla has been publishing scholarly articles and books continuously, and has given papers at numerous conferences. He has been the member of several learned societies (Kőrösi Csoma Society, the Hungarian Society of Classical Studies, the Linguistic Society, and the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the Consultative Committee of the International Association of Sanskrit Studies). In 1980 he acquired the “candidate degree” of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Between June 1980 and May 1983 he taught Hungarian at the University of Delhi, then between 1983 and 1992 he was the director of the Archives of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. From 1992 until 2010 Professor Wojtilla was the head of Department of Ancient History at the University of Szeged (SZTE). Since 2014 he has been the professor emeritus of SZTE and the honorary professor of ELTE. Since 1995 he has taught at the PhD program in linguistics of SZTE, in 2001 he became the head of the Antiquity Program of the PhD School in History at SZTE. In 1996 he obtained his habilitation at ELTE and in 1997 he became doctor in linguistics at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Between 1996 and 2001 he was the head of several institutes at SZTE. Between 2012 and 2015 he was the head of the Habilitation Committee in History at SZTE, and between 1999 and 2005 he was the head of the Oriental Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.

Professor Wojtilla’s field of research is very broad: it includes the history, languages, religions and culture of ancient India, the international relations of ancient India, and the history of Indo-Hungarian relations. He has published almost 250 scholarly articles and books both in Hungarian and in foreign languages (English, German, Russian and Hindi). He has regularly given lectures at international conferences and has been invited to several universities and research institutions to present a paper, from Oxford and Berlin to Benares and Delhi. Among his Hungarian publications we may mention here his book on the cultural history of premodern India, called *A mesés India (Fabulous India)*, which has been published several times and which has been an all-time favourite among students interested in Indian civilization. Professor Wojtilla has also translated into Hungarian works of Sanskrit literature: two ancient Sanskrit “novels”, namely Dāmodaragupta’s *Kuṭṭanāmata (A kerítőnő tanítása [The Bawd’s Counsel]*, Medicina, 1988), and Daṇḍin’s *Daśakumāracarita (A tíz herceg története [The story of Ten Princes]*, Édesvíz, 1998). He also edited and translated a Chrestomathy of Ancient Indian History in Hungarian (*Ókori indiai történeti szöveggyűjtemény*, JATE Press, Szeged, 2012). Two books published by Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, have been the fruits of his long-standing interest in the ancient Indian science of agriculture: the *History of Kṛṣiśāstra* (2006) and the *Kāśyapīyakṛṣisūkti* (2010).

Professor Wojtilla has been a member of the Editorial Board of *Acta Orientalia Hung.* since 1990, and upon his resignation from this position, a short survey of his numerous articles in this journal is presented here. His keen interest in and deep knowledge of *kṛṣiśāstra*, the ancient Indian science of agriculture is reflected in such papers as ‘Kāśyapīyakṛṣisūkti: A Sanskrit work on agriculture I’ (1979), II (1985), ‘The Sanskrit terminology of the plough’ (1988), ‘The Sanskrit *godhūma* apropos of a short excursion in Indo-European and Indo-Aryan prehistory’ (1999), ‘New light on the verse 112 of the *Kṛṣiparāśara*’ (2001), ‘Sanskrit names of plants in the *Kāśyapīyakṛṣisūkti*’ (2002), ‘What can the ‘gveda tell us on agriculture?’ (2003) and ‘Sanskrit and Prakrit *pāmara*: the semantic and social contents of a peculiar word’ (2018). His articles ‘Indian precious stones in the ancient East and West’ (1973), ‘*Ratnaśāstra* in *Kauṭilya’s Arthaśāstra (KA)*’ (2009) and ‘Contributions to the Cultural History of Emerald in Early India’ (2012) show his deep familiarity with Sanskrit lexicographical sources, gemmology and the *Arthaśāstra*, the ancient Indian lore of politics and economics. In another article, ‘The «longer» recension of the *Garuḍo-paniṣad*’ (1975) he examined a manuscript kept at the Oriental Library of the MTA. Professor Wojtilla’s other important contributions to the *AOH* have been his numerous reviews written about a wide range of publications on Indian art history, manuscriptology, history, Sanskrit philology, *artha-* and *kāmaśāstra*, and much more.

Professor Wojtilla’s scholarly dedication, his wide range of interest and his manifold publications set an example for the future generations of indologists. Many young scholars have enjoyed his generous help as well as his colourful anecdotes. For a long time his name was a synonym of Hungarian Indology abroad. We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to him for his work at *AOH*, congratulate him on his 75th birthday and to wish him good health and cheerful spirits so that we can read many more of his contributions in the future issues of our journal.

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