

Warsaw, 25th of February 2017

**Letter from the Staff of Centre for East European Studies, University of Warsaw
in memory of Professor Tadeusz Świętochowski**

It is with great regret and sadness that we learned of the passing of Professor Tadeusz Świętochowski, one of the greatest scholars of contemporary Azerbaijan and the history of the Near East, a very close associate of the University of Warsaw's Centre for East European Studies and our dear friend.

He was born in 1932 in La Madeleine, France. He was the son of Stanisław Świętochowski, a prewar athlete who later served the Polish Second Republic as a diplomat in the Polish Consulates in Lille, France and Dusseldorf, Germany. At the beginning of the Second World War and fascist Germany's attack on Poland on September 1, 1939, Świętochowski was instructed along with other members of the Polish foreign service to evacuate to Romania. He missed his train and tried to reach Romania by travelling through Lviv. In the meantime, on September 17 Poland was invaded by Hitler's ally, the Soviet Union. Świętochowski was arrested by the NKVD and incarcerated in Stanisławow and Kozielsk, and then in the Łubianka jail in Moscow. Following a year-long trial he was sentenced to death and the verdict was executed on December 25, 1940.

Young Tadeusz spent the war with his mother in Warsaw. He joined the Gray Ranks, the secret underground Scouting organization that conducted small acts of sabotage, propaganda, and later armed attacks during the German occupation. As a member of the Grey Ranks he actively participated in the 1944 Warsaw Uprising.

After the war, in the Polish Peoples Republic he enrolled in Turkish Studies at the University of Warsaw. He then travelled via London to Beirut where he resumed his studies at the American University. Later on, he continued his education and pursued research in Cairo, Istanbul, and then New York City, where in 1968 he earned his doctorate in History in New York University's Graduate School of Arts and Science. His scholarly career took him to Monmouth University in New Jersey and Columbia University in New York. Professor Świętochowski was the author of many books and monographs.

Almost from the very start of the formal establishment of the “Eastern Studies” Masters Program in at the Centre for East European Studies Professor Świętochowski visited us in 1998 in Warsaw and provided regular instruction for our students in the history and contemporary issues of the South Caucasian area. His lectures were popular with students, who appreciated his broad knowledge and research experience. Tadeusz had a passion for working with young people, enjoying their curiosity, doubts, and questions. He was always accompanied by his beloved wife Mimi who also delivered guest lectures on Islamic Art to the students of the University’s Department of Oriental Studies. After their lecture stays students were always invited to a pub to share a mug of beer, of which the Professor was fond.

He regularly attended conferences that the Centre organized on the study of the Caucasus and published in our journals. He was the scholarly advisor of many Masters Theses defended at the University’s Centre for East European Studies.

During his later years he divided his time between New York and Warsaw where after many years living abroad he established his second home.

We will remember him above all as the tireless researcher of Caucasian affairs, always open to dialog, distinguished, direct, a teacher dedicated to his students and a warm and wonderful friend.

Tadeusz, we take your leave in sadness and sorrow. But we know also that you are with your beloved Mimi, holding hands as you walk side-by-side.

Sit tibi terra levis!

The Staff of the Centre for East European Studies