FIFTEEN YEARS OF THE EUROJOS PROJECT*

Origin. Project EUROJOS was launched in 2001 at the end of the three-week International School of Humanities of Central and Eastern Europe, organised by Ancient Tradition Study Centre, University of Warsaw, and “Artes Liberales” Foundation in Warsaw, on the initiative of Jerzy Axer. The school programme, designed by Jerzy Bartmiński, was laid on two empirical foundations: empirical (a linguistic analysis of conceptualisations of space, including house/home) and theoretical (the concept of the linguistic worldview). The goal of the seminar was defined as the study of Slavic languages in the period of European transformations. At its core, this programme began as a continuation of research conducted in Lublin since 1985, when work began on the semantics of value terms (cf. Bartmiński 1989). After this first stage, two volumes were published in 1993: Pojęcie ojczyzny we współczesnych językach europejskich [The Concept of homeland in Contemporary European Languages, Bartmiński 1993) and Nazwy wartości. Studia leksykalno-semantyczne [Value Terms. Lexico-semantic Studies, Bartmiński and Mazurkiewicz-Brzozowska 1993). In 2000, the study of the semantics of value terms, part of the Lublin-based linguistic worldview research, was included in the comparative investigation of Slavic languages initiated by Stanisław Gajda (2000; cf. also Bartmiński 2000 and Chlebda 2000 therein).

Organising the framework for research. Comparative work gained new impetus when in 2003 two ethnolinguistic commissions were created: a national one, under the auspices of the Linguistic Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and an international one, established at the 14th International Slavic Studies Congress in Ohrid, Macedonia. The research scope of the two commissions included (in addition to other topics) the linguistic and cultural worldview of Slavs from a comparative perspective. Thus, the EUROJOS project began to function in a network of potential collaborators. Its main theoretical assumptions were linked to ethnolinguistic practiced in two centres, one of which was Lublin

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1 More on this issue, see Lappo and Majer-Baranowska (2013).

(cf. e.g. Bartmiński 2005a,b, 2006b, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2016), while the other
was Opole (cf. e.g. Chlebda 2008, 2010a). In Lublin, collective volumes were
published: Język w kręgu wartości [Language in the Sphere of Values] (Bartmiński
2004) and Język, wartości, polityka. Zmiany rozumienia nazw wartości w okresie
transformacji ustrojowej w Polsce. Raport z badań empirycznych [Language, Values,
Politics. Changes in the Understanding of Value Names in the Period of Political
Transformation in Poland. An Empirical Study Report] (Bartmiński 2006a), plus
a series of articles in the journal Etnolingwistyka, starting with vol. 16 in 2004,
when the annual became the organ of the two ethnolinguistic commissions.

In April 2008, a conference was organised in Lublin by the Lublin team of
ethnolinguists (affiliated with the Department of Polish Philology, UMCS) in
collaboration with Rosemarie Lühr’s team in Jena, Germany. The German team
worked on the project “Norms and values in communication between Eastern and
Western Europe” (cf. Bartmiński and Lühr 2008 for the proceedings and Szadura
and Źuk 2008 for a conference report). In the same year, the renewed proposal
for the EUROJOS research endeavour was presented by Jerzy Bartmiński and
Wojciech Chlebda at the 14th Slavic Studies Congress in Ohrid, Macedonia (cf.
Bartmiński and Chlebda 2008). The proposal was welcomed with great interest.

In January 2009, the EUROJOS project was affiliated with the Institute of
Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IS PAN), whose Scientific Council
appointed a board of fourteen members, with Maciej Abramowicz (UMCS) as chair,
Wojciech Chlebda (University of Opole) as deputy chair, and Iwona Bielińska-
Gardziel (IS PAN) as secretary. Out of 75 concepts proposed for analysis, the
board chose five: house/home, Europe, freedom, work, and honour. The
project brought together scholars from various circles and backgrounds (mainly
linguists, but also sociologists and cultural studies experts). More than one hundred
researchers from many scientific institutions, including nineteen overseas³ and
twelve Polish ones,⁴ declared their willingness to collaborate.

³ Institute of Slavic Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Moscow, Russia);
Ural Federal University (Yekaterinburg, Russia); Belarusian State University (Minsk,
Belarus); Charles University (Prague, Czech Republic); Constantine the Philosopher
University (Nitra, Slovakia); Ivano-Frankivsk National University (Lviv, Ukraine); Humboldt
University (Berlin, Germany); Serbian Language Institute SAN (Novy Sad, Serbia); Rus-
sian Federal University of Humanities (Moscow, Russia); Vilnius University (Lithuania);
T. Shevchenko National University (Kiev, Ukraine); State University of Athens (Athens,
Greece); Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Zagreb, Croatia); Democritus University
of Thrace (Komotini, Greece); Institute of the Bulgarian Language BAN (Sofia, Bulgaria);
Department of Psychology, University of Portsmouth (United Kingdom); Ghent University
(Belgium); Slavic Department, University of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, USA); Stockholm
University (Sweden).

⁴ University of Opole; University of Wrocław; Faculty of Artes Liberales (Warsaw);
Maria Curie-Skłodowska University (UMCS, Lublin); Jagiellonian University in Cracow;
Adam Mickiewicz University (Poznań); University of Silesia (Katowice); Catholic Univer-
sity of Lublin; University of Warsaw; Academy of Humanities (Pułtusk); East European
State Higher School (Przemyśl); Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences
(Warsaw).
Conferences and seminars. Within the EUROJOS framework, with the support of both ethnolinguistic commissions, conferences and seminars continued to be organised, from which reports were published regularly, beginning with the 21st volume of *Etnolingwistyka* (see Bielińska-Gardziel 2009).

The first meeting, held on 17–18 April 2009, was organised by Wojciech Chlebda in Kamień Śląski. It was devoted to the problem of defining the concepts selected for analysis, as well as determining the place and role of dictionary definitions in reconstructing linguistic worldviews. The proceedings appeared as Chlebda (2010a).

Another meeting, in June 2009, was organised by Michael Fleischer in Wrocław. It focused on the use of experimental methods (questionnaires) in linguistic research. The proceedings were not published.5 The result of this stage of the project was a methodological manual for the authors about to engage in analyses of the selected axiological concepts (see Abramowicz, Bartmiński, and Chlebda 2009).

At the third meeting, a workshop that took place in December 2009 in Warsaw, Marek Łaziński presented the possibilities offered by the corpora of Polish and Slavic languages for studying linguistic worldviews. He specifically referred, as examples, to the National Corpus of Polish and parallel corpora of Slavic languages, Interkorp (Czech National Corpus) and ParaSol (a project of the universities in Regensburg and Bern).

The fourth, methodological session was organised in April 2010 in Portsmouth by Jörg Zinken. It dealt with the study of human interaction and texts in reconstructing linguistic worldviews.6

On 23–25 September 2010, an international conference was held in Lublin, titled *Values in the Linguistic and Cultural Worldviews of Slavs and their Neighbours*. This EUROJOS V conference was organised by the Department of Polish Philology, UMCS, and the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences.7

Simultaneously and since its very inception, the project’s details were being discussed, among others, at the meetings of the Ethnolinguistic Commission within the Linguistic Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences.8

Two international conferences co-organised by the Department of Polish Philology, UMCS, and the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences, held respectively on 23–25 September 2010 in Lublin (EUROJOS V) and on 22–25 November 2012 in Warsaw and Lublin (EUROJOS VI), were devoted to the linguistic worldview from a contrastive perspective.9 The former event focused on the methods of semantic analysis of value terms in various languages (Slavic and others),10 whereas the Warsaw-Lublin conference dealt with the specific concepts of house/home, Europe, work, honour, and freedom in the axiological sphere

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5 From among the papers delivered, only one appeared in print (Długosz 2010).
6 For a report, see Niderla (2010).
7 See a detailed report by Bielińska-Gardziel (2011).
9 For a report, see Bartmiński, Bielińska-Gardziel, and Niebrzegowska- Bartmińska (2013).
10 The proceedings appeared as Abramowicz, Bartmiński, and Bielińska-Gardziel (2012).
of Slavs and their neighbours. In the years 2008–2012 there was an ongoing salient discussion in Etnolingwistyka on the contrastive research methodology of the linguistic worldview.

**Financial support.** The new phase of EUROJOS began at the end of 2012, when the Institute of Slavic Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences received a grant from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education for its research project *Methods of Analysing the Linguistic Worldview in the Context of Comparative Studies*. A report on the project results was published as Bartmiński, Bielińska-Gardziel, and Chlebda (2016). The project was summarised during the EUROJOS XI conference in Warsaw, on 13 October 2015. That conference was attended by a total of 45 participants (including 24 from abroad), representing 27 academic centres. The work was summed up, followed by reports from the editors of individual volumes of the LASiS publication series (Leksykon aksjologiczny Słowian i ich sąsiadów [Axiological Lexicon of Slavs and their Neighbours]), i.e. Jerzy Bartmiński, Wojciech Chlebda, Maciej Abramowicz, and Petar Sotirov), who related to the progress on analyses of the five concepts investigated at that stage, i.e. HOUSE/HOME, EUROPE, FREEDOM, WORK, and HONOUR. Svetlana Tolstoy (Institute of Slavic Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow) and Jörg Zinken (University of Mannheim) offered feedback on the project. Finally, a discussion with fifteen project participants was held (both opinions and the discussion are reported on in issue 28 of Etnolingwistyka).

**Summary.** The objectives of the EUROJOS programme in the period reported were realised on two levels: (i) theoretical (proposals for precise conceptual tools for the investigation of the linguistic worldview and their relation to constructs form traditional linguistics); and (ii) analytical (reconstruction of individual portions of the linguistic worldview in Polish and other selected languages).

At the theoretical level, the participants sought to agree on the conceptual and terminological apparatus, as well as a comparable selection of sources and methods of defining meanings. As part of terminological regulations, *lexemes* as units of expression were distinguished from *meanings*, *concepts*, and *ideas* as elements of semantic content, whereas values were described as cultural concepts, i.e. axiologically marked notions with specific cultural connotations. The participants agreed that the data for semantic analysis should be: excerpted from the language systems (including dictionaries) [S for system], elicited speakers through questionnaires [A for ankieta, Polish for questionnaire], and excerpted from texts, such as national corpora and high-circulation press, selected proportionally to representative political and theoretical options [T for text]. This is known as the SAT principle.

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11 The proceedings appeared as Bartmiński, Bielińska-Gardziel, and Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska (2014). Some contributions to the volume were financed with the grant project no. NPRH2/H12/81/2012.
12 Cf. in particular: Bartmiński and Chlebda (2008), Abramowicz, Bartmiński, and Chlebda (2009), Grzegorczykowa (2009, 2011), or Puzymina (2010), with a reply to the latter in Abramowicz, Bartmiński, and Chlebda (2011).
13 Grant project no. NPRH 0132/NPRH2/H12/81/2012.
The measurable effects of the EUROJOS programme until 2015, both financed with the ministerial grant and with other funds (including the individual researchers’ grants), include publications in the journal *Etnolingwistyka* and in collective volumes. As for the latter, in addition to those previously mentioned, four others should be acknowledged here: *Wartości w językowo-kulturowym obrazie świata Słowian i ich sąsiadów 3. Problemy eksplikowania i profilowania pojęć* [Values in the Linguistic and Cultural Worldview of Slavs and their Neighbours 3. Problems Concerning the Explication and Profiling of Concepts] (Bielińska-Gardziel, Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska, and Szadura 2014) and three volumes in the LASiS series: vol. 1 on *house/home* (Bartmiński, Bielińska-Gardziel, and Żywicka 2015);¹⁴ vol. 3 on *work* (Bartmiński, Brzozowska, and Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2016), and vol. 5 on *honour* (Ajdaczić and Sotirov 2017). The work on the two remaining volumes, on *freedom* (ed. Maciej Abramowicz and Jerzy Bartmiński) and *Europe* (ed. Wojciech Chlebda), is advanced. Another forthcoming volume is *Nazwy wartości w językach europejskich. Raport z badań empirycznych* [Names of Values in European Languages. An Empirical Study Report], ed. by Iwona Bielińska-Gardziel, Małgorzata Brzozowska, and Beata Żywicka).

**Perspectives.** At the end of the meeting on 13 October 2015, many colleagues expressed their willingness to carry on work on subsequent volumes of LASiS (if any are planned). Therefore, the EUROJOS project will continue operating under the auspices of the Ethnolinguistic Commission, the International Committee of Slavists, and the Institute of Slavic Studies, Polish Academy of Sciences. It is envisaged to extend its field of interest to the so far rather neglected non-standard variants of language: a specific proposal of *(ETHNO)EUROJOS* came from Stanisława Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska (cf. Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2013). The project remains open to all researchers interested in its theme and the study of linguistic and cultural worldviews (in particular of axiological concepts) in various languages.

*translated by Rafał Augustyn*

**References**


¹⁴ This volume was published thanks to financial support from the Department of Polish Philology, UMCS. The analyses deal with all subtypes of Slavic languages, West, East (without Ukrainian, but with Lemko, Slovenian, and Macedonian) and South, but also a few other European languages (German, French, English, Portuguese, Lithuanian, and Modern Greek). With some extension of the notion of ‘Slavs’ neighbours’, non-European languages were included, too, such as Japanese, Swahili, Hausa, and Tuareg (their descriptions were not financed with the grant).


