

EVA KUŤÁKOVÁ IN SIGNEM DIEM NATALEM CELEBRANS

*Natura fieret laudabile carmen an arte,
quaesitum est; ego nec studium sine divite vena
nec rude quid prosit video ingenium; alterius sic
altera poscit opem res et coniurat amice.*

Hor. ars 408–411

Eva Kuťáková was born on December 8, 1937 – the day of the 2002 birthday of Horace who, in a way, was to become her lifelong patron. That is to say, she shares with this “first Englishman of world poetry” not only a fascination for Latin verse and an ability to critically analyze works of poetry, but also a benevolently sharp wit; perspective; an aversion to extremes; precision and elegance in expression; and a love for the peace of the countryside. For our time, this important jubilee has been reached not by the life of the author of *Satires* and *The Art of Poetry*, but by the one who has represented both him and all of Latin literature already for entire generations as their ambassador to the Czech culture.

Our jubilist is originally from Teplice in Northern Bohemia, from whence, however, her family had to leave after the Nazi German annexation of the Czech border regions towards the end of 1938. The family spent the war living in rather makeshift conditions in the city of Roudnice. Afterwards, they moved to Karlovy Vary, which Eva Kuťáková fell in love with and today still considers her home even though she has been living near Prague for some time now. She graduated from high school in Karlovy Vary, where the world of antiquity was opened to her by the brilliant Latin teacher M. Tomášek, who inspired her – amongst others – with a love for both the language as well as classical literature and mythology. An interest in Latin and its related matter led her to her studies of Latin (in combination with Czech, teaching track) at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University in Prague, which she completed in 1962 with the defense of her dissertation, *The Negative and Positive Traits of Seneca's Characters* (in Czech). It was thus decided: her lifelong interest would be literature, specifically Roman, and Seneca would continue to be one of her favorite topics. Then, after graduation, Eva Kuťáková initially remained for several years as an intern at the then Cabinet of Greek, Roman and Latin Studies of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In 1965, she moved to the Department of Sciences of Classical Antiquity (since 1993, the Institute for Greek and Latin Studies) of the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University, where she is still active today. She was initially an assistant and in 1967 became a senior lecturer; in 1968 she received her doctorate of philosophy (PhDr.); in 1984 she received the academic title of candidate of sciences (CSc.) with a specialization in selected literatures: the theory and history of Ancient Greek and Roman literature. In 1987 she was appointed associate professor of classical literature studies. At the same time she became head of the department (1987–1989); then, in

2000–2003, she was deputy director of the Institute. For many years, she has been a member of subject committees and is the experienced supervisor for the preparation of basic conceptions of materials for study programs for bachelor's, master's and doctoral studies. Her colleagues from the Institute very much appreciate her experience, conceptuality and devotion. Moreover, they appreciate her ability to bring peace to her surroundings by means of her deliberate method and scope and likewise her ability to use her wit to put a thing or two back in its right place.

Eva Kuťáková's research area has been mentioned already: She has devoted herself to Roman literature and always tries to work on her specific topics in conjunction with historical, artistic and comparative aspects. So, every study, even one small in size (our author expresses herself precisely and economically), is proof of the author appropriately and fruitfully connecting a generally literary theoretical level to a concrete problem. From amongst her studies we should mention *Cruenta maenas* (Listy filologické 92, 1969, 250–256) in which, using a relatively small amount of space, she convincingly presents the metamorphoses of the image of Medea in Roman theater from Ennius to Seneca and then the role's ultimate transfer from public space to a private realm. She has also concentrated on Seneca's characters in her essay, *An Unnoticed Aspect of Senecan Drama* (Graecolatina Pragensia 12, 1988, 85–88), in which she exposed the loneliness of Seneca's heroes both through a philosophical dimension and through the social atmosphere of the time of the drama's creation. A major topic for Eva Kuťáková is the relation between folklore and literature, cf. *Fairy-tale Elements in the Jason and Medea Myth. On the Relation of Folklor to Literatur* (Graecolatina Pragensia 11, 1987, 9–21), where she deals with the potential influences fairy-tale elements have on drama and literature. For an example of a study concerning the inspiration antiquity had on subsequent culture, we can refer to the treatise *Horace's puer gracilis and Hilliard's Young Man amongst Roses* (Graecolatina Pragensia 22, 2007 [2009], 73–84), in which she persuasively proves that Horace's odes had an influence on Hilliard's well-known portrait miniature – a theory which would be in accordance with the cultural atmosphere of the Elizabethan era. Eva Kuťáková also works with translation theory and publishes articles about the issue of metrical translations into Czech.

From the beginning of her work at the faculty, she has fulfilled many, various pedagogical duties – moreover, she sees teaching as a particularly important mission of hers. At first, she was entrusted with directing the Latin and Ancient Greek language courses, but in time, her domain became lecturing and leading seminars about the history and various aspects of Roman culture, her main interests being the beginnings of Roman literature (the influence of folklore and questions concerning the autonomy of the Roman culture), literature from the first century B.C. and the first century A.D., but also literary issues concerning the end of antiquity, all the while primarily focusing on poetry. She teaches students to consider every work as historical, as having been created within the certain circumstances of a period and within a given social context; to consider authors as creative individuals and likewise as constituents of a certain literary tradition – an author's intentions, the meaning of a work, and its content and form cannot be understood without thinking about the public for whom the work was meant. In her teaching, in seminars and in lectures about various aspects of the evolution of Roman literature and about the individual genres (lyrical poetry, epic, satire, drama, educational literature)

or authors (esp. the elegists, Horace, Seneca, et al.), Eva Kuťáková maintains the same methods as in her research work, and thus naturally has an effect on students by means of her own example. She arouses an interest of studying in them and is able to deepen it, as evidenced by the amount of final bachelor's, master's, and doctoral (PhD.) theses written under her guidance. We must not forget to mention that she is successful in guiding students to seek a balanced proportion between empathy, which is necessary to understand the texts and the author within the context of the period and literature, and a distance, which is necessary to objectively evaluate the significance of the work within literary and social and cultural history – and in later tradition and reception as well.

Eva Kuťáková also devotes herself to didactics, where she appropriately connects general theory to concrete methods for teaching Latin in a special way. She is involved primarily with literary education and with new methods of teaching Latin; she also reviews Latin textbooks from abroad. She is the co-author of many educational texts and sets of Latin exercises, for example *Linguae Latinae studeamus* (Prague 1998, together with B. Mouchová and D. Slabochová) and *Ad fontes – Cursus latinus* (Prague 2009⁴, together with D. Slabochová).

Since, in her methodically important introductory courses Eva Kuťáková mostly concerns herself with selected texts from Roman poets and thus with verse, it is only logical that her systematical paying attention to metrical forms led her to writing a modern manual about Roman metrics, currently in print (Karolinum Press, Prague).

As seen in the aforementioned contributions she has made to the creation of textbooks, Eva Kuťáková has a great sense of teamwork, for she truly enjoys working in teams. Her conceptuality and imaginativeness have thus “predestined” her for the role of being the *spiritus agens*, the leader and organizer of projects. Here, two publications, both very significant within the Czech context, can be named: *Slovník latinských spisovatelů* [Dictionary of Latin Writers] (Prague 1984, 2nd revised ed. 2004), where she was the editor-in-chief of the classical section (for the non-classical part, it was A. Vidmanová); the co-author of the headwords; and, most importantly, the author of a comprehensive introductory study about the history of Roman literature and its significance as a model, in many respects, within European culture. The second achievement is *Moudrost věků: Lexikon latinských výroků, přísloví a rčení* [The Wisdom of the Ages: A Lexicon of Latin Dicta, Proverbs and Sayings] (Prague 1988, 4th enlarged ed. 2004). Eva Kuťáková was the initiator of this volume; co-author of the headwords (along with V. Marek a J. Zachová); and, once again, the author of a literary theoretical study, both challenging and, for a Czech reader, revelatory in many ways, *Přísloví, gnómy, sententiae* [Proverbs, Gnomes, Sententiae], in which she not only clarified what is specific about the genre of these miniature literary forms, but she also concretized their function of being a medium for preserving humanity's wisdom and experiences. The primary purpose of both of these publications was, of course, to popularize antiquity and its culture, and they were very favorably received by the public. It is noteworthy that Eva Kuťáková also applies her knowledge to the publication of scholarly prefaces to translations of Roman authors (the elegists, Horace, Virgil, Seneca, Apuleius ...) – prefaces, which captivate not only with masterful expertise, but also with brilliant style. Here, too, the author is faithful to her tenet of explaining the significance of classical cultural phenomena from an *quid ad nos* aspect ...: how do they involve us; what do we have in common with them; and to what extent

can antiquity still be alive. – Just as we all do, she, too, observes the problems with Latin (not to mention Ancient Greek) instruction in gymnasiums, and understands a general decline in school programs and lack of support from “higher ups” as an offense not only against a loyalty to the legacy of classical culture, of which Europe officially speaks as one of its “roots,” but also against general education entirely. In this matter, it thus was necessary to launch *Disco Latine*, the Czech Television educational project dedicated to Latin and Roman culture courses (35 lessons) that Eva Kuťáková collaborated on as an author (together with B. Mouchová, the leader of the project, and V. Marek); the “television Latin” textbook was published at the same time (*Disco Latine* I–II, Prague 1995, 1996). This television show received honorary mention at the Basel TV Festival (1995) and was aired three times on Czech Television. Eva Kuťáková tries to bolster the interest of a larger educated public in classical topics even by preparing thematically varying lecture courses in Classical Culture as part of the lifelong learning program (University of the Third Age, University of Leisure Time), which is attended by hundreds.

Eva Kuťáková’s purely personal qualities must also be mentioned. They are, above all, her helpfulness, devotion, honesty and reliability, with which she has gained our favor and which we can always rely on whenever we need her help or experience – and, of course, even in everyday contact. We prize her humor and also, in warranted moments, her poignant judgments.

Donarem pateras... Because we assuredly know that our dear jubilist also *gaudet carminibus*, we can express, by recalling a verse of her beloved Horace, our hope that she, like Horace’s friend Censorinus, will also accept, in interest and with delight, these gifts of words (albeit not exactly poetic), which her colleagues, friends and students send to her in this volume; they have been given sincerely as a display of esteem and a deserved tribute, and also as an expectation that we will be able to continue to enjoy working with her and benefiting from her experience. Dear Eva, *tu et omnes tui multos annos valeatis!*

Václav Marek and Bohumila Mouchová