

PREAMBLE

“The show must go on.” That is what people say when an actor – however important he or she may be – leaves the stage. Similarly, the *History of Ideas Research Centre* and *Orbis Idearum* must go on. Nevertheless, we cannot hide our deep sadness at the untimely death of the founder of the Centre and its journal. Michel Henri Kowalewicz passed away on October 8th, 2016.

We ask the reader to please forgive the unusually colloquial tone in which we are writing this Preamble; a style that is far from academic jargon and the cold precision which is typical of scientific publications. It seems to us that the moment calls for such a change of register. In the period between his diagnosis with cancer and his untimely death, we fortunately had many occasions to meet and talk with Michel. Despite the rapid progression of his illness, Michel remained strong to the very end. Whenever he had the strength to do so, not only did he continue his own work, but he also helped others with theirs. There was unfortunately not enough time to settle all of the questions related to the Centre and *Orbis Idearum*, but Michel made clear his desire that both be continued by his close collaborators and friends. In our attempt to fulfill his wish, we present you, the reader, with a new issue of *Orbis Idearum* – an issue that we sincerely dedicate “to the memory of Michel Henri Kowalewicz”.

Michel was well known by academics in several countries, including Poland, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the United States. His international contacts were facilitated by the fact that he was fluent in several European languages. As the news of his death, and of our subsequent intention to dedicate an issue to his memory, reached his friends and colleagues around the world, we began to receive manuscripts for review. Some scholars submitted works on which they

had already been working for some time. Other scholars communicated their desire to be part of the initiative, but they asked for more time in which to finish their papers. While attempting to keep the biannual structure of the journal, we also want to be as inclusive as possible and to allow those who cared about Michel and his work to submit a contribution. It is for this reason that we decided to dedicate *both issues of Volume 4* to the memory of Michel. This will also allow for the inclusion of manuscripts that, due to the length of the peer review process, did not manage to be part of Issue 1. For the same reason, we also decided to be more flexible as regards to the disciplinary status of the contributions. We are well aware that some of the papers appearing in Volume 4 do not belong to the field of the history of ideas *sensu stricto*. Indeed, some of the contributing scholars are not historians of ideas, however, they expressed the desire to pay their respects to Michel in this way. As they say, rules are meant to be broken. Michel was a first-rate scholar. He was a stickler for detail and a staunch advocate for the history of ideas. At the same time, he also deeply valued his friendships and he would go to great lengths to include and support those who were interested in common projects, something that often required crossing traditional academic barriers. We intend to continue his advocacy for this particular field, while also honoring his spirit of inclusivity. His are big shoes to fill. He is deeply missed.

THE EDITORS

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