

Editor's Note

We invite you to read this issue of *Terminus*, entirely devoted to genology and its problems. The section “Research Papers” opens with two insightful studies by Grażyna Urban-Godziek on albas, or love songs that use the motif of lovers parting at dawn—a genre known from mediaeval Romance lyric. The first of these papers is devoted primarily to traditional (folk) albas, which retain the original form of “women’s song” (French *chanson de femme*). The study presents a new, more detailed classification of this genre. The division into traditional (folk) and courtly (scholarly) albas, which has been established in the literature on the subject, is here complemented with two mixed subtypes (on the borderline between courtly and traditional form) and illustrated with examples. The second paper presents in detail the most canonical form of the genre, i.e. the courtly alba of the Occitan (Provençal) troubadours. Urban-Godziek discusses the classifications of variations of courtly alba, as well as analysing and criticising various theories concerning the origin of this genre. These two extensive studies are well illustrated by the material we have included in “Editions and Translations”. This section includes selected traditional and courtly albas in Polish translation by Magdalena Pabisiak. These are the first Polish translations of these poems, made from five mediaeval Romance languages and Latin. Grażyna Urban-Godziek’s introduction to these translations presents the technical aspects of translating this kind of lyric. Such a translation poses specific linguistic challenges, related to the recreation of the metric system of Romance lyric in a language with different prosody, syntactic structures, length of words or vowel frequency, as well as strictly textual problems, such as different variants of the transmitted text and setting the criteria for making particular choices in the translation. The introduction

outlines a historico-literary perspective for the collection of albas presented. It also discusses some terms in *fin'amor* poetry that are difficult in translation.

Another genre presented in this issue of *Terminus* is the riddle (*aenigma*, *griphus*, *logogriphus*). This literary form, particularly popular and successfully practised from the 16th to the 18th centuries, is eruditely discussed by Barbara Milewska-Ważbińska. She traced the definitions of riddles in Latin treatises and textbooks from the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries and examined modern riddle theory in the context of ancient genealogical reflection. Her study also covers the systematics and theory of the genre, which is explained in a Latin manuscript handbook from the first half of the 18th century (Baworowski Library, catalogue number 704).

The content of this issue is completed with a review of William Cavet's book entitled *The Smoke of London: Energy and Environment in the Early Modern City*. Wawrzyniec Miścicki presents an interesting study of modern London, a metropolis which in the 17th century based its economy on black coal, thus inevitably entering the path of momentous social changes and increasing air pollution.

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