

In Memory of Andrzej Antoszek (1971–2013)

I knew Andrzej Antoszek for a quarter of a century—longer than any other Polish Americanist—since we played on the same high-school basketball team and studied together in the English program at Maria Curie-Skłodowska University. After graduating, Andrzej went on to work at the Department of English at the Catholic University of Lublin, while I enrolled as a graduate student in English at the University of Warsaw.

Passionately engaged in American Studies in Poland, Andrzej did important work in two fields: postmodernism and African American Studies. His doctoral dissertation on Don DeLillo paved the way for a group of young Polish academics who continue to work on postmodern



fiction. Andrzej was among the first authors in Poland to publish scholarly as well as popular essays on cyberpunk and avant-pop at a time when these phenomena were still unknown to the Polish reading audience. His activity as a scholar and critic was not limited to strictly academic pursuits; he was a frequent contributor—as author or translator—to literary journals and served as a guest-editor for such established journals as *Akcent* and *Magazyn Sztuki*. He translated into Polish the works of prominent American writers, among others Susan Sontag and Robert Coover.

Andrzej's achievement in the field of African American Studies was perhaps even greater than his contribution to the study of postmodern American literature and culture. In 2009, he co-edited a volume of essays entitled *Black on White: African Americans Who Challenged America*; this book is the most comprehensive presentation of African American culture, literature, and history in the Polish language to date, a true milestone of American Studies in Poland. He performed his academic and other duties with utmost professionalism and dedication. In 2006, he co-organized an international seminar on African American culture in Puławy; this event provided a strong impulse for a further development of African American Studies in Poland and East-Central Europe.

The international community of scholars and students was his natural environment: he gave papers and lectures in Europe, the United States, Australia and Japan, as well as organized workshops for translators at the Imperial College in London. He had ambitious plans for the future: he was developing a new project on contemporary African American culture's engagement with the social, political and economic life of the black community and wanted to do the major part of research during a Fulbright Fellowship at the University of California.

Andrzej was about to complete his post-doctoral book entitled "Domesticated Narratives. Contemporary Polish Representations of African American Culture: Rap and Hip Hop Lyrics, Moving Pictures and Other Stories"; we agreed on the dates when he would send me the manuscript and I submit the review to the publisher. The manuscript never reached me.

The untimely passing of this outstanding scholar is an enormous loss to the American Studies community in Poland.

Marek Paryż