New Generation of Electronic Edition for Neo-Latin Literature
Rescue from Oblivion — Stage II
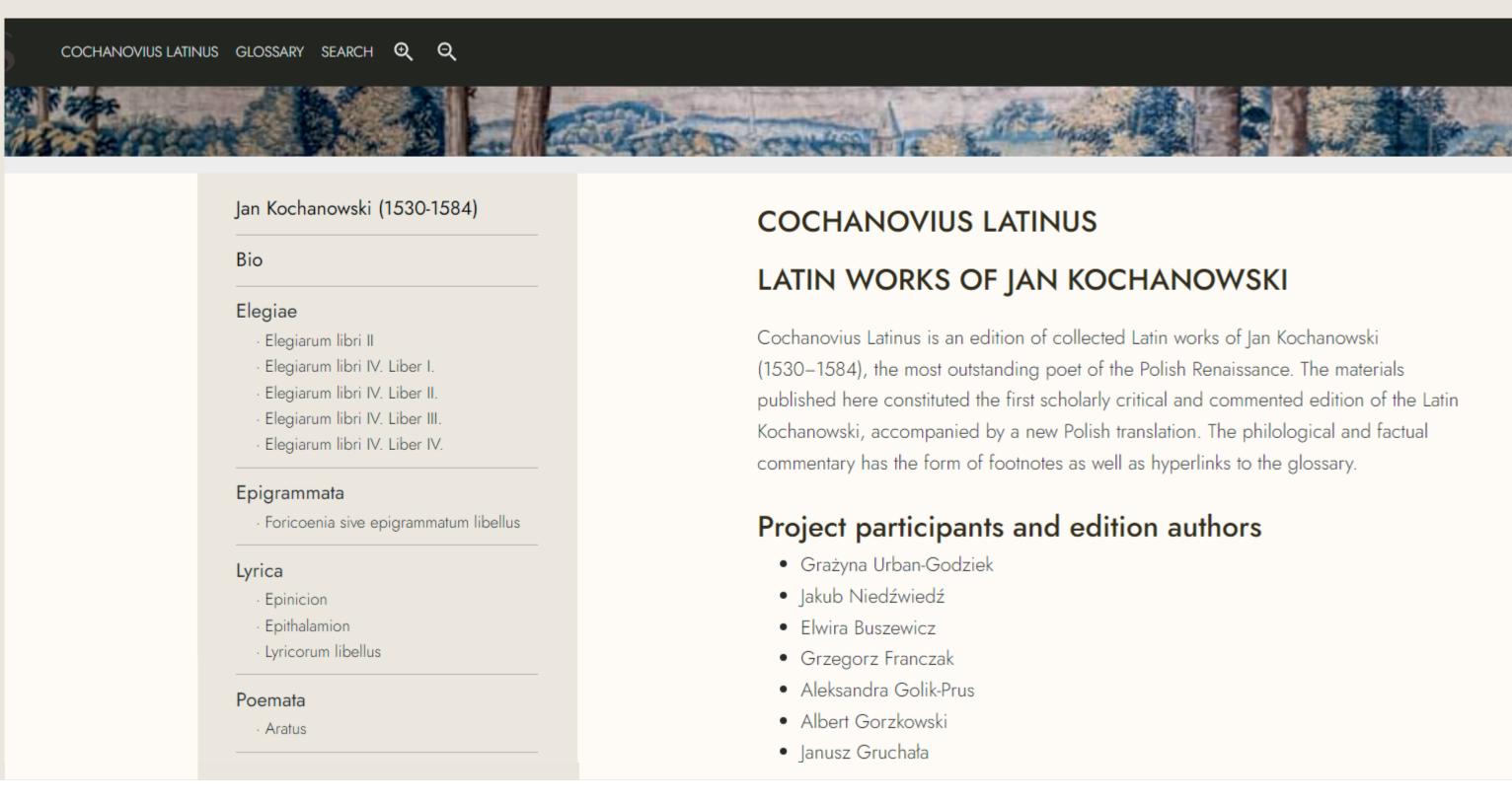

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tei Publisher

NEOLATINA SARMATICA is a repository of critical editions of Latin texts created by authors associated with the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the state consisting of the Kingdom of Poland, Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Royal Prussia, and Duchy of Prussia. NEOLATINA was established in Renaissance Literature Lab at the Faculty of Polish Studies of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland, and is maintained in the Jagiellonian Centre for Digital Humanities and developed with TEI publisher. The funding is provided by the Jagiellonian University's Flagship Project "Digital Humanities Lab".
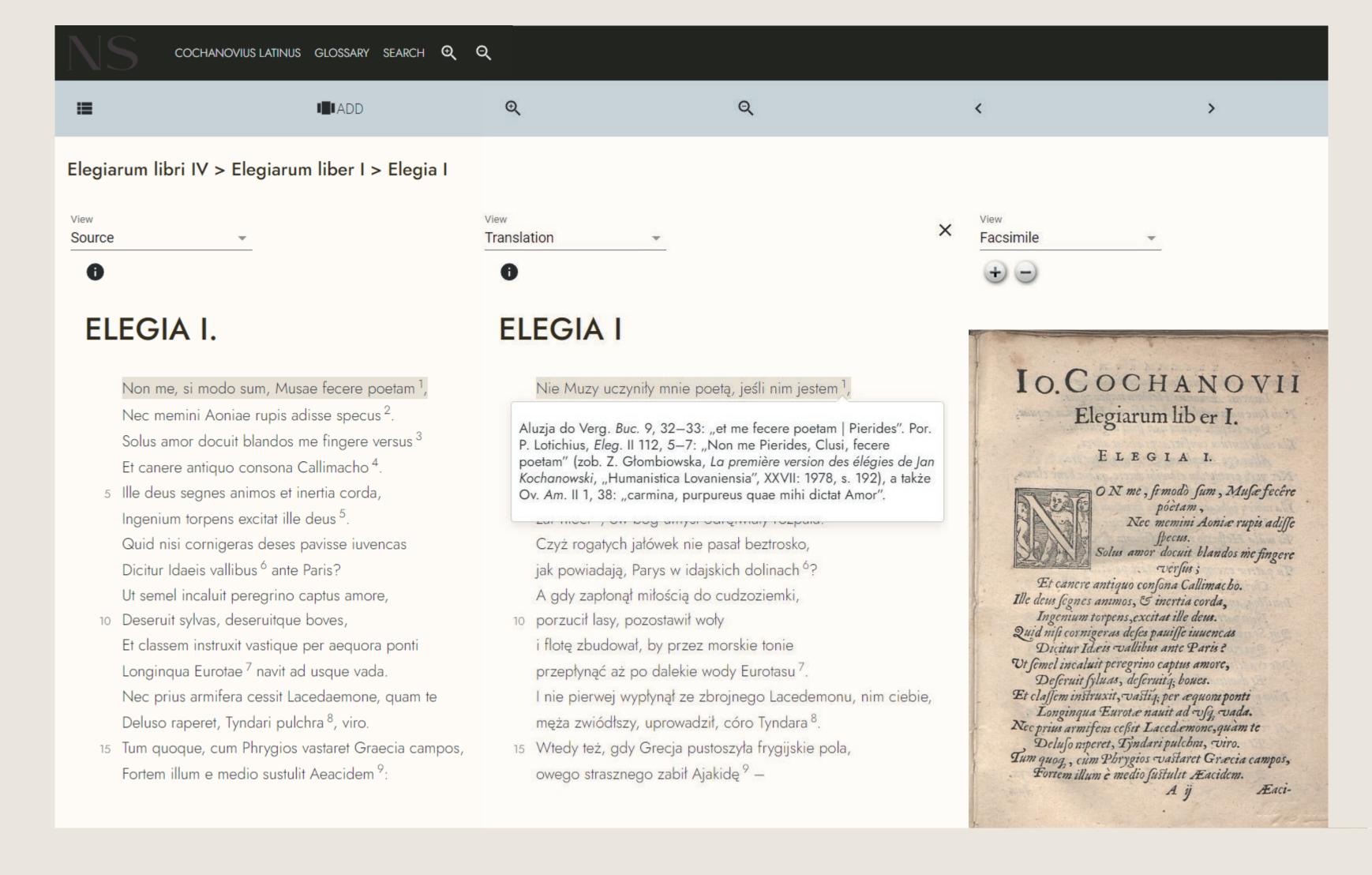

The first version was created in the years 2006–2011, with the view to building a digital platform housing the first modern translation and critical edition of the collection COCHANOVIUS LATINUS, the complete Latin works by Jan Kochanowski (1530–1584), a Renaissance Humanist considered the most important and influential Slavic poet until the end of the modern era. Kochanowski's enormous impact on Polish literature and culture had been widely recognized and thoroughly researched, whereas his Latin output did not garner much attention on the part of scholars or editors. Suffice it to say that in the 20th-century there was only one critical edition from 1884, with no commentary.

Published in 2011, our electronic platform presented the content in a static way, with the transcription, translation and facsimile views accessible as separate files due to the technological limitations of the HTML structures. It did not allow comparison, searching or problem-reading. The design of the new version is based on semantic principles and uses tools that allow transcription, translation and text-tracking data to be combined simultaneously in two or more languages. This is intended to make the texts accessible to readers with a diverse range of reading and digital competencies, including researchers who are well versed in the original language, less skilled readers who are taking their first steps in linguistic research, as well readers who require additional support tools.

The new version of the service is based on TEI Publisher. It is multilingual in the sense that the texts are segmented in such a way that it is possible to compare different language versions, search for similar structures at the level of language commentary and compare text fragments between the original, translation and facsimile. Entire textual units are cross-referenced in transcription, translation and facsimile. Additionally, contextual, linguistic, historical and geographical comments will be provided according to the needs of the reader, and accessible by choosing one of the language versions of the text.

The repository is open to collaboration with other academic centres and researchers from Poland and abroad who are welcome to join us with their projects. We intend to provide a virtual space for Latin texts written in the Early Modern period and related to the culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, currently stored in the libraries of Lithuania, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Estonia and other countries. We aim to develop standards for digital editions of Neo-Latin texts and tools necessary for their creation.

Once the transfer of COCHANOVIUS LATINUS is complete, we plan to expand the database with new collections: AUCTORES SARMATICI LATINI — the catalogue of Latin authors connected with the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; New Translations of Old European Poetry; Old Polish Translations of European Classics.

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