Marta Pszczolińska, "Entry on: Tytus, Romek and A'Tomek. Book 15: Tytus Becomes a Geologist [Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek. Księga XV: Tytus Geologiem] by Henryk Jerzy Chmielewski [Papcio Chmiel] ", peer-reviewed by Katarzyna Marciniak and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/750. Entry version as of November 04, 2026.

Henryk Jerzy Chmielewski [Papcio Chmiel]

Tytus, Romek and A'Tomek. Book 15: Tytus Becomes a Geologist [Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek. Księga XV: Tytus Geologiem]

Poland (1982)

TAGS: Atlanteans Atlantis Latin (Language)





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	Tytus, Romek and A'Tomek. Book 15: Tytus Becomes a Geologist [Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek. Księga XV: Tytus Geologiem]
Country of the First Edition	Poland
Country/countries of popularity	Poland
Original Language	Polish
First Edition Date	1982
First Edition Details	Henryk Jerzy Chmielewski (Papcio Chmiel), *Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek. Księga XV – Tytus Geologiem*. Warszawa: Młodzieżowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1982, 64 pp.
ISBN	8320314067
Genre	Action and adventure fiction, Comics (Graphic works), Humor, Humorous comics
Target Audience	Crossover (children, teenagers, young adults)
Author of the Entry	Marta Pszczolińska, University of Warsaw, m.pszczolinska@al.uw.edu.pl
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Katarzyna Marciniak, University of Warsaw, kamar@al,uw,edu.pl Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Marta Pszczolińska, "Entry on: Tytus, Romek and A'Tomek. Book 15: Tytus Becomes a Geologist [Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek. Księga XV: Tytus Geologiem] by Henryk Jerzy Chmielewski [Papcio Chmiel] ", peer-reviewed by Katarzyna Marciniak and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/750. Entry version as of November 04, 2026.

Creators



Courtesy of the Author.

Henryk Jerzy Chmielewski [Papcio Chmiel] , 1923 - 2021 (Author, Illustrator)

Comic book writer, graphic artist and journalist; as a soldier of Armia Krajowa [Home Army] with code-name "Jupiter" he took part in the Warsaw Uprising (1944); illustrator for a teens magazine *Świat Młodych*; author of many comic book series, including the widely popular *Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek* [Tytus, Romek and A'Tomek], a well above 30-part comic book series about a talking chimpanzee who tries to become human; awarded the *Gloria Artis Medal for Merit for Culture* (Gold Class), the Warsaw Cross of the Uprising, the Commander's Cross of the *Order Polonia* Restituta (for outstanding achievements in national culture) and the Order of the Smile, an international award (launched in Poland in 1968) given by children to people distinguished in their pro-children activities.

Source:

Official website (accessed: July 4, 2018).

Bio prepared by Magdalena Łokieć, University of Warsaw, magdalena.anna.lokiec@student.uw.edu.pl.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs

Books I – XXXI:

Chmielewski, H. J., *Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek: Księga VI – Tytus olimpijczykiem*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Harcerskie „Horyzonty", 1971.

Chmielewski, H. J., *Tytus, Romek i A'Tomek: Księga XIX – Tytus aktorem*, Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka, 1992.

Summary

The series presents the characters of two boys, Romek and A'Tomek, trying to humanize their animal friend, a talking chimpanzee, Tytus de Zoo. Each booklet focuses on a different theme, but gradually, Tytus learns to be more human-like through experience, adventures and fun. In booklet 15, Tytus and his friends receive a "screwdriver" vehicle facilitating underground research as a gift. Tytus, as a test pilot, directs the machine into a cinema to watch a film for adults. Later on, the boys' crew receive a lesson in geology before they start their field exploration. Having learned enough, they are admitted to embark on their underground journey. During the trip, they discover an abandoned coal mine, a cave with prehistoric creatures, a banana plantation on the Canary Islands, a sunken/collapsed city of Atlantis, an underground lake of petroleum, and a country of dwarfs, where they are temporarily miniaturised. In this form, they are invited to go back to the surface, where they experience the dangers of ordinary things, like a falling apple, a hungry bird, a lizard, a snake or rain. Having returned to the dwarfs' realm, the boys realize that their vehicle had been taken apart; they decide to appropriate a weekend-rocket they have used before on the surface, and they return to Professor T. Alent's laboratory. They use the maximizing equipment of the dwarfs to regain their normal size.

Analysis

This book is a great example of how to combine educational and entertaining goals in a comic book aimed at children. Through the amusing adventures of child protagonists, the author presents knowledge in an accessible way. While the characters explore the

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

world, the child reader accompanies them. The best example is a geology lesson the protagonists need to master to be admitted on the trip. Along with them, the reader acquires the same knowledge and grasps the fact that learning does not necessarily have to be boring. The lesson is not limited to material from textbooks. At first, professor T. Alent, inventor of the vehicle, tells the boys about the earth's crust which he illustrates by showing them diagrams hanging on the wall. The second part of learning is much more interactive; as they go to the kitchen where the professor proceeds to teach them creatively, he prepares a layered poppy seed cake to show the movements of strata during orogenesis. Having eaten the cake, the boys read geological books. Tytus visits a natural history museum to look at exhibits. Chmielewski introduces children to the idea that learning may involve play and allows the readers to assimilate some scientific facts effortlessly.

An undeniable asset of the booklet is Chmielewski's use of humour which fits children's taste and appreciation. For example, when the characters reach the lake of petroleum, the precious resource disappears in the hole made by the screwdriver. Having seen a big drill from an oil company, they make a joke by leaving a note, allegedly from Lucifer, saying that the petroleum is confiscated as a punishment for crossing the borders of hell. In a witty way, Chmielewski also brings attention to serious problems, such as the natural environment, overexploited by humans. For example, Tytus states: "What a time!* Humans have divided the world into parts and there is nothing that belongs to no one – meaning nothing belongs to animals" (p. 24), and the dwarfs want to miniaturize humanity to avoid food shortages (p. 41).

The references to classical antiquity are made in a five-page long scene set in an unspecified underground location which appears to be the lost city of Atlantis. Having left the Canary Islands, Romek hopes that they can find the lost city of Atlantis; A'Tomek answers that it is probably only a myth. The dramatic principle of Chekhov's gun is used because the name of Atlantis appears for the first time before the lost land is reached. When the screwdriver encounters an empty space, the presence of a column suggests that the space is man-made. The place looks like an underground city with remnants of an ancient fortress or temple. The characters wear spacesuits and explore the ruins, which seem to be abandoned. Romek again mentions the legendary Atlantis as a possible identification, and A'Tomek hopes

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

that their discovery will shed light on the development of humankind because the ruins resemble the civilization they know from their times. The protagonists encounter strange crystals emitting light. The analyzer they have translates the light into speech, and the children learn the story of the rise and fall of Atlantis and its inhabitants, turned into crystals to preserve their memory. The way Chmielewski presents the lost civilization combines key elements of the ancient legend of the submerged city with a contemporary setting. An advanced civilization, its fall and disappearance into the Atlantic Ocean described by Plato in *Timaeus* and *Critias*, has been preserved as necessary to identify the myth. Still, Chmielewski chooses an entirely original way of telling the story to Polish children. To better reach children's imaginations, he shows the material quality of life dramatically different from the conditions in Poland of the 1980s. In the ruins, a crushed car and a worn-out bicycle may be seen among the broken columns. The crystal tells a story about the universal abundance of possessions available to all people in Atlantis, including items that were difficult to obtain in Poland at that time. Statistically, Atlantis had 16 TV sets per capita, 32 kitchen appliances or a dozen and a half pianos (p. 28). An illustration shows a couple sitting in a car parked on a carpet in a very well equipped apartment; they are watching a variety of TV programs. There is a small table with a whole big ham, a glass and a full bottle by the driver's side. In 1982 – the date of the first edition – Poland was under martial law; there was a shortage of proper housing and such a deep economic recession that many goods, including food, had to be strictly rationed and were available only with a ration card. The big ham, which seems freely available in an average Atlantean home, was a symbol and a sign of unreachable luxury. Chmielewski alludes to the martial law imposed by the communist government not only when writing about Atlantis. For example, when the dwarfs obsess about being spied upon by foreign countries (p. 43), the protagonists look for hidden microphones or cameras to ensure no secret surveillance (p. 60).

Even though the motif of Atlantis is presented briefly and superficially, the scene contains elements, such as an Ionic column among the ruins, indicating that the myth belongs to the ancient Greek culture. The educational value of the scene comes from marking the presence of the Atlantis legend in culture and providing a background that children could further develop on their own. Another minor reference to classics is the "Romanized" design of the building of the Institute of Geology with a Latin motto *MENTE ET MALLEO*

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

(with thought and hammer) which refers to the work of a geologist.

* Which alludes to the famous Ciceronian quote *O tempora! O mores!* (*In Catilinam*, 1.1.2).

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Atlanteans Atlantis Latin (Language)
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Adversity Animals Boys Child, children Humour Invention Journeys Learning Other literary figures, texts and writers Pop culture references Science Storytelling Supernatural creatures (non-classical) Talking animals
Further Reading	Marciniak, Tomasz, "Metakomiks dydaktyczny. Jubileusz H.J. Chmielewskiego i międzypokoleniowy przekaz Tytusa, Romka i A'Tomka", *Guliwer. Dwumiesięcznik o książce dla dziecka* 2 (2004): 35–42. Marciniak, Tomasz, "O Tytusie polimedialnym", *Guliwer. Dwumiesięcznik o książce dla dziecka* 3 (2011): 28–33.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.