# Alma Mater Jagellonica

## *The Sixth Centennial of the University of Cracow, Poland*

*Contributions by:*
DR. WILLIAM J. ROSE,
MRS. WANDA STACHIEWICZ

1493 woodcut of Cracow, then capital of Poland.

Sponsored by the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, Canadian Branch.

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WILLIAM J. ROSE

## MEMORIES OF CRACOW CITY AND UNIVERSITY

In May 1926 I had the good fortune to be "promoted" to the status of *Doctor philosophiae* of the Jagellonian University of the ancient city of Cracow. I was presented to the Rector Magnificus, Professor Stanislas Łoś, by Stanislas Kot, under whose guidance I had worked in the field of cultural history. My thesis was written on the reform movement in eighteenth century Poland, led by the celebrated Piarist Father, Stanislas Konarski. Supporting the Rector in the Great Hall, over whose podium hung Matejko's picture of Copernicus surveying the heavens, was the pro-rector, Tadeusz Estreicher.

It would be idle to say that for my wife and the American friends present in the large audience this was an occasion of note. I like to think that for a large number of Polish "colleagues" and friends present, a few of whom have survived the terrible ordeal of the intervening years, the event was also of special interest. But I have to confess that I did not really deserve the distinction at the time, and my only comfort is that I may have been able in subsequent years to make up for some of the deficiencies of which both I and my teachers were aware at that time. Now, nearly forty years later, I am asked to set down some recollections of those days. If the first personal pronoun recurs too often in what follows, I can only crave indulgence.

* * *

My first sight of the ancient city on the upper Vistula came on a dull February afternoon and evening in the year 1919. Coming from Cieszyn, I was on my way to Warsaw to report to Sir Esme (Later Lord) Howard, second in command of the famous Noulens Commission, on what was going on in the Duchy. As all know, Czech forces had broken the agreement made on the previous 5th of November, re the

frontier between the two allies in that area. They had brushed aside the few Polish troops, and occupied the whole length of the trunk railway from Berlin to Belgrade that lay between Bogumin and the old Hungarian frontier. This included Cieszyn itself, and the new line lay between this town and Skoczów. Colonel Latinik was holding it, with a too small body of troops.

The officers of the Liquidation Commission in Cracow had been notified of my arrival, and were waiting for me at the station. I was in the uniform of the Red Triangle (khaki civilian dress), but with me was a young American lieutenant, carrying reports for Professor R.H. Lord, the American member of the "Big Commission." We were shown every kindness, taken to see a few of the "sights" of the city before darkness fell, and then given a good dinner. Afterwards we sat together in the big café at the corner of the *Planty* and Karmelicka St. drinking coffee and discussing the new world that was ahead—until it was time to catch our train. I recall that although there was music, no dancing was allowed.

On leaving, I tried to express my thanks to the Colonel for his hospitality, but he stopped me. "None are necessary" he said. "You have no idea what it means to us Poles to be able to receive friends in this land as our own masters!" I have never forgotten that answer.

Trapped by the sudden outbreak of war at the end of July 1914, my wife and I had been civilian prisoners in Austrian hands in the village of Ligotka Kameralna, half way between Cieszyn and Frydek. The local pastor, Karol Kulisz, a man of integrity and devotion to his life-work who was to be martyred by the Nazis in the autumn of 1939, was our sponsor with the authorities, from whom we received every consideration. He was to become my first (and best) teacher of Polish when I began to learn the language properly the following year. In time, he introduced me to Cieszkowski's *Ojcze Nasz* ("Our Father") and later on made the journey to Cracow to meet Professor Ignacy Chrzanowski and to bring back for me the available volumes of that great work. He also obtained for me a copy of Żółtowski's thesis on it which had won him the Doctor's degree in Munich a few years earlier. In due course I set to work on a (shortened) translation into English, which was almost finished when peace came. It was to appear the following summer in London, under the title *The Desire of All Nations*.

As things turned out, we were not to settle in Cracow until the fall of 1920. During the first, and for the Poles, troubled year of independence, my wife lived in Cieszyn, while I worked in Warsaw with the Y.M.C.A. Service Mission which had come to Warsaw around

Eastertime with Haller's Army from France. When it became likely, in the middle of the Summer of 1920, that Warsaw might be invested by the Bolshevist invasion, a sizable part of these workers (especially the women) were moved to Cracow, and I was sent with them. Before autumn, we had found a flat (no easy matter) on Karmelicka Street, where we remained till 1925.

Since my chief duty was to care for needy students, I was away from home at least half of the time. Travel conditions, bad at first, improved as time went on. Repeated visits were made to the universities just taking shape. Warsaw had been in action since the autumn of 1915, when the Russians were thrown out, but Wilno, Poznań and Lublin were truly pioneering—"making bricks without straw." To start with there was an acute shortage of living quarters of any kind for students. Then came problems of food, clothing, and everything needed for the class-room. Surgeons were operating without gloves, patients were two-abed in many wards, students were sharing clothing, taking turns in going to classes and lying in bed on the off day. Instruments like slide-rules for engineers were unobtainable.

Fortunately some help could come from the Red Triangle people, but we had to depend more on the American Red Cross and (especially for food) on Hoover's A.R.A. The generous response given by these and other agencies made possible the equipping of former barracks for dormitories, the finding of clothing (even old uniforms of various colors) for the men, and food-stuffs on a large scale for the dining-rooms. Cracow possessed a student residence, and we tried in vain to get those in charge to install a cafeteria service. Poznań was able to "commandeer" one, but elsewhere things were indeed difficult. By chance I had the good fortune to be in Lwów on the day when the Medical Students' *Mensa* was formally opened by the Rector, Jan Kasprowicz—one of the greatest Poles I have known. Later on we got some help for the Lwów students who were building their own residence, as well as a sum of money to help finish the first Women's Residence in Warsaw, which stood for a year without a roof! What became known from early in 1920 as European Student Relief was renamed International Student Servise in 1927, and is still functioning today the world over as WUS. My contacts with the university authorities and the officers of *Bratnia Pomoc* during those trying years are still a precious memory.

* * *

During my year in Warsaw I became enrolled in the University on the strength of a letter from Oxford and of my "Kollegbuch" from

Leipzig 1912-13. Whenever time permitted, I got to listen to the veteran Smolenski in history, Kleiner and Ujejski in literature, and on occasion the grammarian A.A. Kryński. I was taken a couple of times by a friend to hear the celebrated Petrażycki—home at last after a life-time in Russia.

But all this was play rather than work. Even after we were settled in Cracow attendance at lectures was more honored in the breach than the observance. It could not at the time be otherwise. Even the reading I completed was unsatisfactory. I missed no opportunity to take part in Chrzanowski's courses on literature and was present to hear Kallenbach. I attended some history lectures—notably those of Konopczyński, but did no reading. It was clear that work for a degree in Letters would involve me in language study, including Old Slavonic, for which I was not fitted. I therefore decided on Cultural History as a "safer" field. As it happened we were on furlough in Canada during the second half of the year 1923, when the Konarski celebrations took place; but when I got to know the man and his work I realized how valuable this field was to me.

Before telling of this, however, I must go back a little. My first contacts with the university had been from the side of Student Relief. For one thing the Red Triangle people helped to equip the former Barracks just off Karmelicka St. for a student residence, and they provided a "matron" in the person of a fine Polish lady, home from Russia. At the formal opening, the Rector, Stanislaus Estreicher presided and spoke in fitting fashion. I recall how he told me one day in confidence that some of the retired professors had such pitiable pensions that they were in dire straits—but would never let others know. I found ways of getting precious sacks of basic foods left on their back door-steps; and it may now be told that the beloved philosopher Witold Rubczyński, was one. As it turned out he was later to be one of the oral examiners for my degree.

Lack of space forbids me to write of how I came to depend on university men like Estreicher, Julian Nowak, Leon Marchlewski, Jan Piltz and Roman Dyboski for guidance and help in many ways. The names of Rolle, of the journalist Żuk-Skarszewski, and of two business men from the Rynek, Jan Fischer and the painter Juliusz Grosse, should be added. In particular I should like to tell of our good relations with that devoted servant of youth, the Jesuit Father Kuznowicz, in whose crowded Home for Apprentices (in time replaced by a stately new building) my wife and I first saw the Polish Christmas play "Jasełka." It was here that we got to know Michael Dziewicki, soon to be famous as the translator of Reymont's masterpieces, and his tireless wife. One

regret must be noted: though I knew of his work, I never did meet the famous Brother Albert, whose example will long stand in the service of the "down-and-outs" of the city, for others to emulate.

Then came a double "crisis." The first was news that the American Red Triangle Service Mission was being wound up, and not long afterwards that the Old Arsenal on Grodzka St. in which we had served both soldiers and civilians for years was to be taken over by the University Department of Geography under Professor Sawicki. In the nationwide demand that something Polish be created to perpetuate the work so well begun, Cracow played a worthly role. New quarters had been found just opposite the Sokół Building, and a Laymen's Committee, with Marchlewski as chairman, was ready to receive him when, on his second visit to the country, Dr. Mott told us that a wealthy Cleveland industrialist was prepared to give the money needed for a fine "Ognisko" for youth, it the people of Cracow would undertake to furnish it. How this was all realized under the management of E.O. Jacob of Illinois, with Wacław Krzyżanowski as the architect, is a matter for historians. For the first time in four years I was now free of executive tasks.

* * *

A prelude to all this had happened early in the year 1921. A group of people who were impressed by the work done by Red Triangle leaders, most of them Americans of Polish extraction, asked me whether I could attempt some public addresses on the spirit and work of the Y.M.C.A. in America, assuring me of an audience. The sign of the Red Triangle was hanging in three or four places in the city, and they felt that something of this kind should be done. When I agreed and began to prepare, I had no idea that the place would be the Copernicus Hall in the University, or that Chrzanowski would consent to be my chairman. This was a signal honor, but also a real challange. The place was crowded on three evenings; at the first address many had to stand.

In discussion and questions that followed each time, the learned Father Urban expressed concern at the way in which I assumed the equal place of the evangelical churches alongside the Mother Church of the west. But it was all done in the right spirit, and contributed, I think, to a better mutual understanding. After the first lecture, I was accosted by the famous philosopher, Wincenty Lutosławski, whom I had got to know in Wilno. The chairman had spoken of my work on Cieszkowski, and Lutosławski was really offended because I had dared to abbreviate the work of the master. I tried to explain that no London

publisher could or would have accepted the whole work, and then turned to my chairman for help. But the visitor would not be appeased. I should add that the Sala Kopernika remains in memory as a sort of *sanctum* not only for Chrzanowski's lectures heard there, but for public addresses heard given by men of the calibre of Karol Hubert Rostworowski, the veteran Greek scholar, Professor Tadeusz Zieliński and others.

But I must get back to my major theme, studies in the history of Polish culture under Kot. The Seminar I attended was concerned with the Reformation of the sixteenth century. There *were* men who did the book-work, and two of them are alive today—Czesław Chowaniec and Henryk Barycz—both of them scholars of distinction. All this helped me to appreciate the tensions of that age, and in particular the beauty of Kochanowski, the learning of Frycz-Modrzewski and the eloquence of Piotr Skarga. It was also to form a background, against which I could put my reading, later on, in the sorry "Saxon Times" and the heroic though sober remedies proposed by the Piarist Father Konarski.

Thanks to a hint from Kot I had been able to procure at a private book sale a copy of the original edition of *Effective Counsels in Government*—published just two hundred years ago as I write. Konarski's shorter works, on language and on education proper, were to be read only in Latin, and I was warned that the reading of these would taken a lot of time. All of these controversial books evoked rather spirited replies from men who disagreed with the "reformer," and I could not avoid taking such replies into account. One formal snag threatened the whole enterprise: Professor Konopczyński had a MSS ready for publication dealing with the whole subject, and if his work appeared in print before my thesis was handed in I was in danger of having it rejected.

I asked for, and obtained one favor: that I be allowed to present the thesis in English instead of Polish. This was granted, with the proviso that a substantial resumé be appended in Polish. With the editing of this latter I had the help of Dr. Stanislas Kubisz of Cieszyn, who (may I add) was only one of the fine younger men of that time who were to lose their lives needlessly fifteen years later—either in battle against the Nazis or in Russian exile.

For the actual writing of the dissertation I asked for and obtained in the high summer of 1925 a month's leave of absence from social work; and I settled with my books and papers in a room in the former Russian frontier-post ten miles north of Cracow, on the outskirts of Szyce village, not far from Ojców. This ruined group of one-story buildings the Red Triangle Mission had restored to use five years earlier,

and carried on Summer Courses there for the training of workers in our youth centers. In this work we were helped by men of the calibre of Alexander Janowski; the sociologist, Florian Znaniecki and Roman Dyboski, the last of whom at my suggestion gave our group a series of talks on "the Fight for a Man's Soul in Captivity." He had come back, not long before, from seven years' imprisonment in the depths of Russia. I should add that when the Polish Y.M.C.A. found that it needed its workers for the Boys' Camp work at Mszana Dolna, this property was turned over to the Association of Grade School Teachers, and one of the men whom I had known on the Bratnia Pomoc Committee years before in Cracow—Ignacy Solarz, was put in charge. When I was able to make a brief visit there after the World's Congress of Historians in Warsaw in 1933, I found that a large boulder had been placed in the front yard with the name of the Highland poet on it—Władysław Orkan.

But again I digress, and the reader must forgive me! With a first draft of the MSS complete I could then invoke the competent assistance of my wife for the business of typing the whole: but I well know that it did not present the handsome appearance that such a document should have when presented to the proper authorities. It was handed in before the New Year, I was given instructions as to what to prepare for the *viva voce* tests that came in the spring, and—as already noted, I received my degree in May. A copy of the MSS went to London that autumn, and I had the good fortune to have it published by Jonathan Cape in 1929.

It is true that I was the first man from the English-speaking world to attain the Doctorate in a Polish university in modern times, but many things were said about this which I did not deserve. Those who knew recalled the fact that just over four hundred years earlier the English scholar Leonard Coxe had lectured in Cracow, and had published in Latin a paper *De Laudibus celeberrimae Academiae Cracoviensis.* More credit was given me than I deserved, for each step in the eleven year process from the Ligotka days to the "promotion" seemed to be dictated by a sort of "fate." And things did not end here. On the strength of what happened in May my good friend Eric Kelly, author of the story for young people *The Trumpeter of Cracow,* got me a place on the staff of Dartmouth College in New Hampshire: and from there I was taken to the University of London eight years later. Here I had the difficult task of following in the footsteps of two distinguished scholars—Julian Krzyżanowski and Wacław Borowy. All of this was rather alarming, but after World War II I was able to help steer a young Oxford man, with a sound training in modern history,

to the University of Cracow, where he repeated what I had done in worthier fashion. I mean, of course, Dr. Peter Brock, now at Columbia University.

In conclusion, some general reflections. It would be idle to pretend that I managed even a single year of serious study in Cracow of the sort I did in Leipzig in 1912-13. For this there were various reasons, apart from the fact I was now nearly forty. With the startling change in world affairs I had dropped my attention to Classical Studies and turned to modern Europe. Both during and after the war I was at pains to find out why it had to come: not the war in the west between German ambitions and British and French fears, but that in Central Europe, where the wrongs done by the Congress of Vienna had to be put right. Too few people in the English-speaking world knew anything about Central Europe, or about the vast world of Tsarist Russia in 1914. Only later did I discover how few. Apart from A.B. Boswell no one really knew much about Poland: so great a figure as Thomas Masaryk was unheard of in Britain until after he escaped from the Dual Monarchy in December 1914. Clearly there was a gap to be filled, and even a rank outsider might help.

Things were made worse by the fact that statesmen had become wedded to the idea of the balance of power and to the time-honored tradition of paternalism in state and church, seemingly oblivious of what this might mean to whole nations living in subjection to foreign rulers. As a corollary, they wanted dynasties preserved, and feared the consequences of radicalism anywhere. Finally, though three Poles had become world famous before 1914—one a musician, the second a novelist, the third a scientist, the view prevailed that the nation was probably meant to live in subjection, and might well prove incompetent to govern itself!

No one will deny that it was not easy for Poles of widely differing orientations to come together, and create a working and viable state. But the fact is that they did, and I count myself lucky to have been a spectator of what went on during eight years. Nevertheless all this did distract my attention, making serious study more difficult.

Let me now end on a happier note. It fell to my lot from time to time to pilot visitors who had some knowledge of men and things around the ancient city of Cracow. Half a word, as the Russians say, sufficed for such people to place what they saw where it belongs in the time stucture of European civilization. Since I admire Gothic more than Baroque, I would take them to see the Wit Stwosz altar in St. Mary's, the university courtyard in St. Anne's St., the west window in

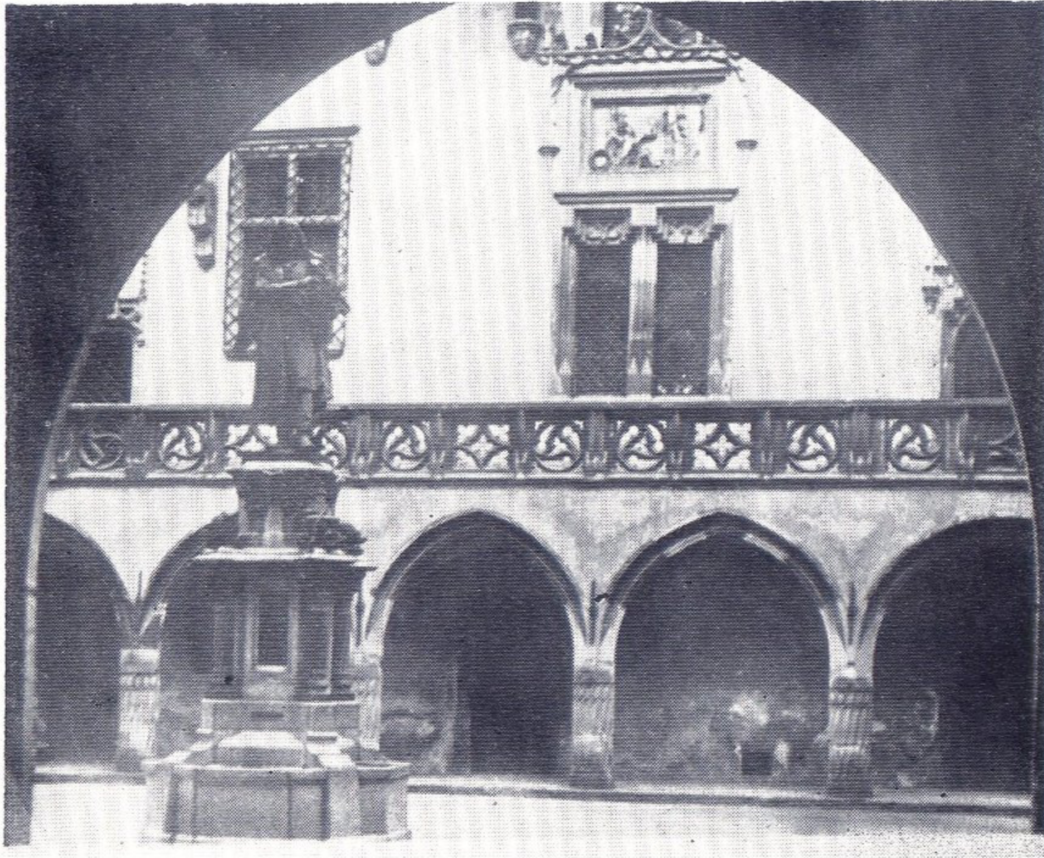
the Church of the Franciscans (a modern creation, it is true!), and the North Gate and Barbican. But we always ended up be seeing that oldest of monuments on Wawel Hill—the tiny romanesque remains of the chapel of St. Felix and St. Adauctus.

We would stop on All Saints' Square, and I would remind my guests that townsmen had gathered there on a Sunday morning to exchange news and views for six hundred years: to discuss the discovery of America by Columbus, or a generation later the fears as to what would happen if the Turks took Vienna. I would tell them of the *Colloquium* in the Royal Palace in 1431, where Peter Payne defended the theses of Wiclif and Hus; and of the great doings in 1365 when Kazimierz entertained in lavish manner half of the princes of Europe.

As for the university, it was in the forefront of European thought at the middle of the sixteenth century; and from the time when, in 1867, it was able to get rid of the teaching in German thrust upon it by the Habsburgs, it has marched with the best. In history and literature, in mathematics and both physical and biological sciences, in law and medicine, in the fields of psychology and sociology, it has kept the flag of action and progress always flying.

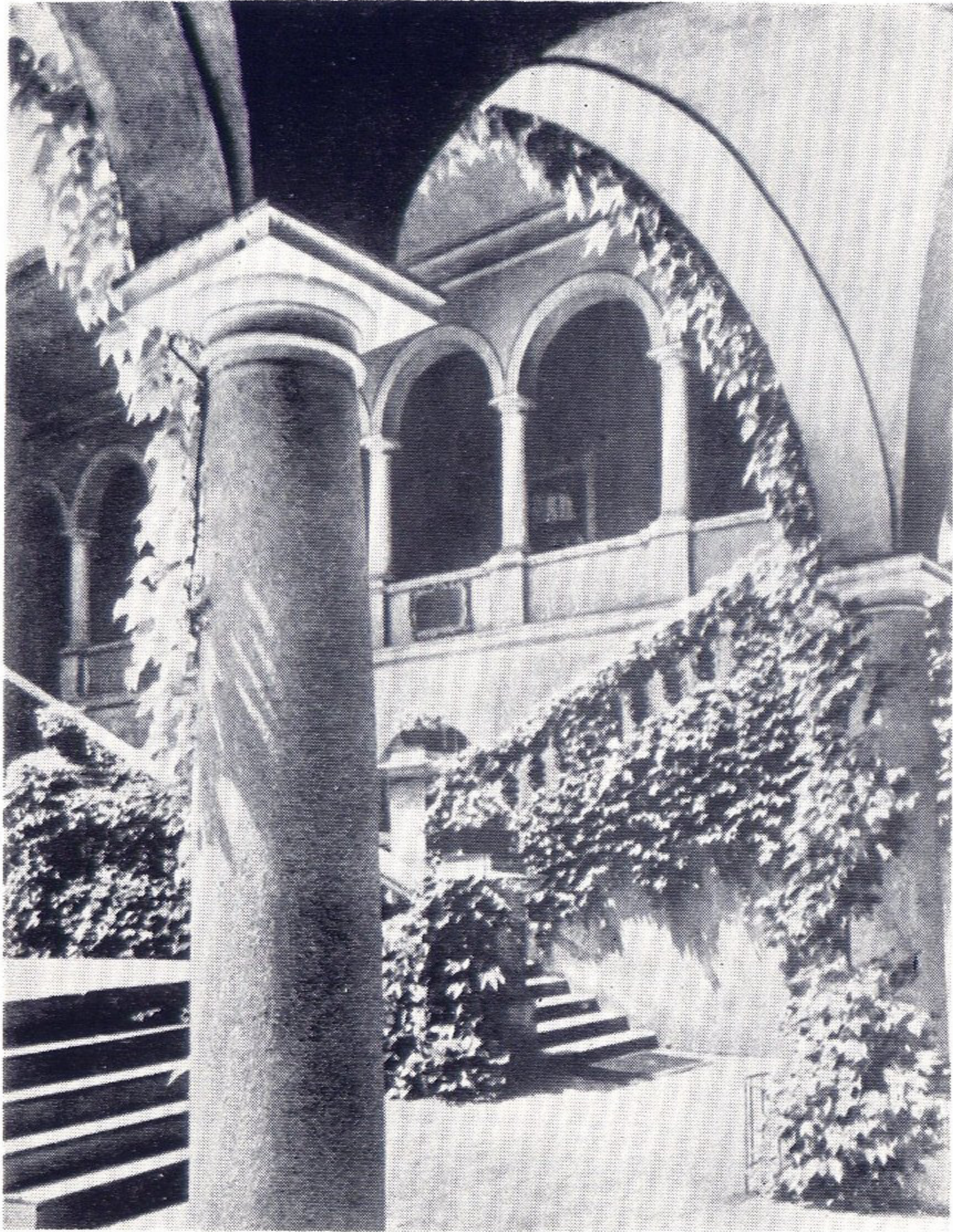
Dla Polaków ojciec Kraków
A Warszawa matka.
(For the Poles Cracow the father
And Warsaw the mother).

may perhaps be true. But for me *alma mater Cracoviensis* rings deeper echoes. Along with others I owe her a debt I can never repay. Long may she flourish!



*The Courtyard of the Cracow University building called "Collegium Maius." In the centre the monument (since relocated) of Copernicus, an alumnus of the University from 1491 to 1495.*

*Aula Collegium Maius of the Jagellonian University, Cracow, XVII c.*



*Courtyard of one of the XVII c. Colleges, Cracow University.*

*Jagellonian Library, Cracow University. XX c.*

WANDA STACHIEWICZ

# THE JAGELLONIAN UNIVERSITY
## (An Historical Sketch)

### FOUNDING OF THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Cracow was founded in 1364 by King Casimir the Great, the last descendant of the first Polish dynasty, the Piasts. It is the oldest institution of higher learning in Poland and the second oldest in East-Central Europe. It was founded after the University of Prague (1348), while the Universities of Vienna (1365), Heidelberg (1386) and Cologne (1389) were established later.

In the fourteenth century, universities were institutions of international importance and degree-recipients could teach anywhere in Europe. The permission, not willingly nor easily granted, to establish a university lay with either the Pope or the Emperor, the two highest authorities of the time.

The first universities in Europe were founded on the territory of the old Roman Empire, on what is today Italy, France, Spain and England. The task of establishing a university in a relatively remote area such as East Central Europe was much more difficult. Not only was an adequate economic and cultural milieu necessary, but also the persistence and personal influence of the founder, usually the king. Poland and Bohemia were fortunate enough to have the kind of rulers needed at that time, King Casimir and Emperor Charles IV respectively, and for years there were very friendly relations and an interchange of students and teachers between the University of Cracow and the University of Prague.

In commemorating the six hundredth anniversary of the founding of Cracow Academy, as it was known at the time, we pay homage to King Casimir and to his great conception of creating on the fringes of Western civilization a "spring of learning," a light in his nation's life. For the past six centuries, the University has been fulfilling its mission of spreading knowledge not only throughout Poland but also abroad.

It has served the nation and contributed to the collective heritage of humanity.

## THE EARLY YEARS OF THE POLISH STATE

Poland's fate has largely been determined by the Latin form of Christianity which she accepted in 966. Her Christianization brought her into the Western European community and exposed her to new and vast cultural resources. Despite the constant struggle against invaders from both the East and West, Poland has continuously tried to develop and consolidate her cultural life.

The reign of Casimir the Great (1333-1370) was one of relative peace and prosperity. The King successfully avoided wars and laid the foundation of a strong, well-organized state. He established laws for Poland and built new towns. Jews, who were persecuted and expelled from other countries, especially from Germany, were allowed to settle in Poland. Progressive, and recognizing the importance of education to a prosperous country, Casimir attracted artists, scholars and craftsmen from abroad, and his conception of founding a university was closely linked with his efforts to modernize the State and to bring it to the level of a European power. The international Congress held in Poland's capital in 1364 is an indication of the King's success in this direction.

During this period, education rested primarily with the Church. Monasteries from France, Bohemia and Germany, which settled in Poland and brought with them Western cultural influences, assumed responsibility for education. At the beginnig of the fourteenth century there were parochial (lowest), monastic, collegiate and cathedral (higher) schools. At first, they served the education of priests almost exclusively, but, from the middle of the century onward, those who attended the schools were not only future clergymen, but also gentry, burghers and various students who wished to get instruction in such subjects as commerce, accounting, court records and civic duties.

Several parochial schools existed in Cracow, the Church of Our Lady being the best. There was only one Cathedral School two or three hundred years old which had the sole right to teach the seven liberal arts and performed the duties of a university. King Casimir decided to base the university upon this school, but his conception was much broader.

His idea of a university, which he had nurtured for many years, was that it should be an unusual institution, liberal and progressive, a

harmonious union of Christian and classic learning, where, alongside of the clergy, laymen would teach the liberal arts, law and philosophy. He felt that the student body should not only be educated intellectually, but also trained to become worthy citizens of the country who would contribute to the advancement of Polish statesmanship and progressiveness.

It took many years of negotiations to bring this great idea into being. Fearing a refusal because of possible competition with Prague, King Casimir did not seek ratification from Emperor Charles IV, but instead turned directly to Pope Urban V. However, political rivalry delayed the creation of Cracow University for many years. At last, consent was given by the Pope for three faculties, Law, Liberal Arts and Medicine, and on May 12, 1364, Casimir the Great issued the foundation charter of the University of Cracow or, as it was known then, the Studium Generale, which also meant: open to all. The document is still preserved in the treasury of the University, and reads in part as follows:

> Not doubting that this will bring salutary advantage to the subjects of the Kingdom and of Our lands, with the consent of the Most Holy Father... We decided in Our City of Cracow to... found... a place in which a Studium Generale in each admissible faculty should flourish... and by virtue of the present charter we establish it for perpetuity. Let there therefore be the pearl of predominant learning, that it should produce men eminent by the maturity of their counsel, outstanding by the splendor of their virtues, skilled in various disciplines. Let there be opened an invigorating spring of learning, from the plenitude of which all desiring knowledge might draw.

The Italian Universities of Bologna and Padua, founded in the twelfth century, and the University of Paris, were of different types. Paris, the oldest, was ecclesiastical, while Bologna and Padua were of a lay nature with legal orientation. The Cracow Studium Generale was organized along the lines of the Italian schools. However, it had more lay influence than any European university and was more liberal and autonomous.

The Faculty of Law played a dominant role since jurists were needed to help the King reform the country's legislation as well as for diplomatic service. Three chairs of canon law were established and five of Roman law were planned. There was one chair of medicine and one of the seven liberal arts (grammar, dialectic, rhetoric, mathematics, astronomy, music, and a combination of geometry and geography). The Arts were linked with the School of Our Lady whose status was raised to the faculty level.

The international character of the University was apparent from the

beginning. Most of the professors, whose number quickly reached twenty one, were educated in Prague. Seven were brought from Italy. There was also a number of foreign students.

At the head of the University — the *Universitas scholarium et professorum* — was the Rector, who was elected from among the fellows in residence. Though the Pope requested that the Bishop approve examinations, there is no indication that this request was ever carried out. The examinations were approved instead by the King's Chancellors.

The King, whose castle was probably the site of the University, had construction of new buildings begun in his newly founded town of Kazimierz, now part of Cracow. But there is no record that they were ever finished or occupied.

Casimir, who closely followed the development of his cherished institution, which he called *filia mea* (my daughter), was rewarded when the first Bachelor degrees in Liberal Arts were conferred. However, he died, childless, in 1370 only a few years after the creation of the University, his death preventing the full realization of his great plans. Further development was halted and the University of Cracow fell into decline.

## THE JAGELLONIAN UNIVERSITY

New life was instilled into plans for the University through the efforts of Poland's girl-queen, Jadwiga, grandniece of the late King Casimir. A Hungarian-Polish princess of French — d'Anjou — descent and crowned "King" of Poland, she married the pagan Grand Duke of Lithuania, Jagiełło, and through this union not only brought Christianity to Lithuania, but also considerably enhanced Poland's position as a European power.

The young queen, of whom a Cracow chronicler writes: "there was no equal of royal blood to her in beauty, wisdom and goodness in the whole world in her time," gathered around herself a group of men devoted to the idea of the University, including Bishop Wysz, her adviser in University affairs. Impatient over the delay in getting permission from the Pope to establish a faculty of Theology, which was urgently needed for the Christianization of Lithuania, Jadwiga set up a special college in Prague where Lithuanians could study. Though Pope Boniface IX finally granted permission in 1397 to establish a faculty of Theology, the Queen did not live to see her work accomplished. She died in childbirth in 1399, bequeathing in her last will all her personal jewels, the famous Anjou collection, to the University.

In July 1400, the University was reopened by Jadwiga's widower, King Władysław Jagiełło. Thus it has come to be known as the Jagellonian University rather than as the Cracow Academy. The King was the first to inscribe his name in the *Album Studiosorum,* the registry of the University.

The solemn and magnificent inauguration ceremony, which lasted for three days, from July 22 to July 26, was attended by dignitaries, the urban patriciate, gentry, students, townspoeople and foreign guests. The Chancellor of the University, Peter Wysz, delivered an inspiring lecture. Stanisław Scarbimirovius was the first Rector.

The changed situation of the country, due to the eastward expansion which had been made possible through the union with Lithuania and Ruthenia, was reflected in the curriculum as well as in the organization and spirit of the new University. Because of the new need of bringing Christianity to the pagan lands which had been joined to Poland, the faculty of Theology rapidly gained in importance. No longer did Bologna serve as the model, but rather the Sorbonne, with its strict collective system and emphasis upon theology.

Drawing upon the generous gift of the late Queen, Jagiełło donated a building on St. Anne's Street to the new University. Later enlarged and called the Collegium Maius, the building housed the faculty of Theology and Liberal Arts. Soon afterward a College of Canonists was organized, and towards the middle of the fifteenth century, a third college, Collegium Minus, which brought together the young professors of the Faculty of Arts, was formed. For three centuries, University activity was confined to these three colleges, which were residences as well as administrative units, although there had also been a short-lived College of Medicine. In 1410, one of the Theology professors donated a large house as a student residence. This became the first student community hostel.

## THE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNIVERSITY

Each faculty of the University was autonomous and elected its own dean every six months. The Rector was elected at the same time from among the professors and, together with the three deans, ruled the University.

Instruction continued the year round since the younger professors held classes during the summer. Studies consisted chiefly of reading and analyzing existing textbooks on dogma, law, rhetoric, grammar, logic and medieval poetry. Later, classical poetry was introduced. Latin was the language of instruction and, in addition to lectures, dialectical in-

terchange, for the development of logical thinking, was the main method of teaching.

After two years of study in Liberal Arts, a student was eligible to take the examinations leading to the Bachelor's degree. The Master of Liberal Arts was awarded after another two years and further examinations. In general, examinations were quite rigorous. It took several more years to obtain the Doctorate in Law or Medicine and about eight or nine years for the Doctorate in Theology. The line between "scholars" (students) and professors was not clearly defined. For example, it was not uncommon for a Master in Liberal Arts to teach in his own faculty and, at the same time, study in another faculty for the Doctorate.

In the first enrollment after the reopening there were 205 students, but within ten years this number grew to 849. The faculty of the Seven Liberal Arts was the most active and granted the first degrees. Originally it had thirty-four professors while there were only three theologians and three jurists. However, as the University became more ecclesiastical, these figures gradually changed to eleven chairs of Theology, eight of Law, and twenty-two of Liberal Arts. Three-fourths of the professors were of Polish origin.

The King lent his support to the growth of the library, the nucleus of which was the old twelfth century collection of the Cathedral School. The library grew through the donations of kings, authors, magnates and bibliophiles, and today there still exists a number of manuscripts which were originally donated by these individuals.

The University was an urban institution and professors and students were mainly of burgher origin. The towns and cities of Poland enjoyed great prosperity at the time and the wealthy Cracow burghers, who played host to the multitude of foreign kings, princes and dignitaries that visited the city for treaty or University ceremonies, dazzled their guests by the splendor of their receptions and their places of habitation. The sons of the gentry, who did not expect to become professors, usually went abroad. There were also very few students of peasant origin at the University since a peasant could attend only if his landlord wished him to and was willing to pay for him.

Professors and students shared an almost monastic existence. Meals were taken together, attire was prescribed, and there was common lodging in the Colleges. Celibacy was obligatory for students and only towards the end of the fifteenth century did married professors appear. Thus, though the population of Cracow was very friendly and generous towards the students, University life except for holidays, celebrations, student pranks and frolics, was rather monotonous.

The older professors received a stipend from the King, for which

they performed various ecclesiastical or court duties, while the younger men made their living from tuition fees paid by well-to-do students and from services rendered to churches, schools and offices. Other sources of income for the University were the salt mines, church estates, and various grants.

In the early years of the University, the students lived with the masters, for whom they performed many services, or at parochiel schools in Cracow with their pupils. Beginning with the second half of the fifteenth century, however, most of the students lived in hostels founded by benefactors like Jan Długosz or Cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki. Only very rarely did students live outside of the University.

An old Cracow chronicle relates the following interesting story: A young girl, who was eager to learn but could not enroll at the University because of her sex, cut her hair and, generally, disguised herself as a man. She attended lectures in Liberal Arts for two years with other students without being discovered. By accident, her identity was disclosed just as she was nearing the Diploma of Bachelor. The professors and students were so amazed and indignant that at first they were disposed to burn her at the stake. However, it was proved that "she had conducted herself modestly and discreetly and had studied fervently and had caused no harm or annoyance to any of her fellows" and her case was dismissed with a stern admonition. The girl, humiliated by the proceedings, decided to enter a convent.

## UNIVERSITY ACTIVITIES DURING THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

The University of Cracow took a leading part in public life. Its professors, distinguished by their profound knowledge, proved to be equal to their mission. They were active in all aspects of public affairs. For example, they drafted treaties at peace conferences, negotiated agreements for the State, and served as diplomatic envoys. A number of them, such as the theologian Paweł Włodkowic (known as Paulus Vladimiri), won renown at the great Councils of Constance (1414-18) and Basle (1431-49), where they attracted the attention of foreign historians. At that time, Councils were not solely devoted to religious issues, but were also a kind of international congress where the participants, both laymen and clergy, dealt with political problems.

Paweł Włodkowic, the representative of Poland, presented several treatises on problems confronting the church to the Council of Constance, which was trying to promote the idea of Christian universality. His papers, written at least one hundred years before foreign

scholars considered its problems, expressed his progressive ideas and his support for ecclesiastical reform. They were masterpieces of legal knowledge and were of significance for the whole of Europe. Later, at the Council of Basle, the treatises of Cracow professors, who argued in favor of the supreme authority of the Council in Church matters, enjoyed great popularity and won the admiration of participating foreign scholars.

The University also took a stand in Poland's conflict with the Teutonic Order, which was threatening Poland's north-western borders. At the Council of Constance, Polish delegates not only defended the Polish case against the Teutonic Order, but attacked the knights themselves for heretical tendencies. During the whole sixty years of the dispute with the Order (1407-66), the University supported the State in its legal demands and, in doing so, developed a new theoretical discipline, that of International Law.

In internal affairs, the University played its most important role in the organization of the elementary and secondary educational system. Teaching positions in the schools were filled by scholars who were trained in the Faculty of Arts and who brought with them new insights which helped to break down the existing Latin rigidity.

Polish learning extended into Lithuania and Ruthenia, and Kiev, capital of Ruthenia and cradle of Russian civilization, became, the first great Eastern center of Westernizing influence. However, a formidable adversary of Poland was arising in the East, the Empire of the Tsars of Muscovy.

## THE UNIVERSITY IN THE GOLDEN AGE OF POLAND

The reign of the Jagellonian dynasty, which affected every phase of life, and established a tradition which was carried down through the centuries, has been called the "Golden Age" of Poland and of Cracow. Cracow's cultural atmosphere was almost without equal. Here, in the ancient capital of Poland, Polish Kings were crowned and here they erected their castles and churches, here nobles and merchants built their richly embellished palaces, and here, at the end of the fifteenth century, the Jagellonian University respected by the whole country and protected by the Kings, reached the height of its greatness.

The humanistic spirit, which had been emanating from Italy since about 1450, was one of the chief sources of the growing intellectual life of Poland. The Italian Renaissance was responsible for the beginning of modern European culture. The development of liberal thought,

the scientific study of man and the world, the rapid growth of national consciousness, the revival of Classical culture, and later the Reformation, all contributed to the enrichment of life. Cracow University introduced the study of Platonic philosophy, Greek and Hebrew, and graduates of the Classical Faculty became teachers of Greek in neighboring German universities. Lively contacts with countries of the West, especially with Italy, brought to Poland fresh humanistic thinking which was free from the limitations of medievalism.

After the defeat of the Teutonic Order, free access to the sea was restored and Poland enjoyed a period of relative peace and prosperity which provided the economic basis for the Golden Age. Gold poured into the country from the sale of timber, grain, furs, honey and amber, and made possible the promotion of the arts and the purchase of jewels, pictures, elegant garments and tapestries.

In the field of education, the clergy persistently urged rich men of the day to keep at least one son in a university, either Polish of foreign. Thus, Polish names continue to appear in Italian, French and German universities. These young men returned from abroad inspired by the spirit of progress which they found in Europe. On the other hand, Cracow University had been growing in renown since the days of the international councils. Its high academic standing, as well as the broad scope and intellectual zeal of its scholars, attracted not only native students but also foreigners who formed nearly half of the total enrollment.

The following statistical data give some idea of the development of Cracow University:

| | Number of students | | Number of professors | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | from abroad | | from abroad |
| 1400 (at reopening) | 205 | | 40 (mostly educated in Prague) | |
| 1410 | 849 | | | |
| 1400-1433 | 4,254 | 800 | 128 | 46 |
| 1433-1509 | 17,263 | 7,611 | | |
| 16-th century | 19,360 | | | |

In the second half of the fifteenth century, mathematics and astronomy grew in importance and the curriculum was again modified. In addition to theology, law and philosophy, the chairs of mathematics and astronomy, which did not exist anywhere else in Central Europe, brought widespread fame to Cracow University. Pope Pius II, an historian before he became Pope, wrote in his *Historia Bohemica* that Cracow was "arte mathematica celebris," that Cracow excelled in the art of mathematics. Many students from the German lands, Hungary, Scandi-

navia, Switzerland, and even Italy, came to Cracow to study under Adalbert of Brudzewo, the head of the school of Cracow astronomers, and legend has it that Faust made his way to Cracow to complete his education.

Nicolaus Copernicus, the great Polish astronomer, was not quite nineteen years old when he arrived in Cracow from northern Poland in 1491 to study at the University. His name can still be seen in the *Album Studiosorum.* He remained until 1494 and studied under the great mathematicians, philosophers, and astronomers, and the education he received formed the basis for his discovery of the heliocentric system of the universe. Throughout his life, Copernicus maintained close scientific relations with the University and its famous mathematician, Martin Biem, who was author of a remarkable project for the modification of the Julian Calendar. Copernicus' heliocentric system, which transformed astronomical thinking, and his book, *De Revolutionibus Orbium Caelestium,* won numerous supporters in Cracow despite the fact that his new world outlook, which dared to challenge Ptolemy's theory, was fiercely attacked by the old conservatives. In 1578, the theories of Copernicus became the subject of a public course at the University.

In the fifteenth century Polish History was placed on the curriculum of the Faculty of Arts where it helped to stimulate interest in the country's past. The greatest historian of the period was Jan Długosz, tutor and teacher of the King's sons. His fundamental work, *History of Poland,* in twelve volumes, is based on a wealth of documentary material. Długosz maintained close relations with the University and, at an advanced age, urged its historians to continue his work in historiography.

There was equal interest in geography and in the recent discovery of the New World. One of the oldest globes of the world, called the "Jagellonian Globe," is preserved in the museum of the University. The Near East, about which little was known at the time, also received special attention from Cracow geographers. Maciej of Miechów was the first to give an excellent description of the peoples of Eastern Europe in his book, *De Duabus Sarmatiis,* which was long regarded as the most authoritative work on the subject. Maciej was also the author of a history of Poland for University use. The book, printed at the beginning of the sixteenth century, was the first to be printed in Poland.

As elsewhere in Europe at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the physical sciences were very little developed. However, the study of medicine existed and this fostered the study of botany. In 1472, Jan Stanko wrote a treatise on Polish flora, in which he used the Polish

names for herbs and flowers, names which are still used today. Later a herbal, *Zielnik,* by Martin of Urzędów was published.

The University also made a great contribution to Polish Literature and Language. It began, for example, to deal with the long-neglected problem of uniform spelling. Interest in the vernacular was growing and, by the the middle of the sixteenth century, Polish was rapidly replacing Latin as the language of legislation, administration and literature.

The newly discovered art of printing with movable type gave impetus to the spread of knowledge. Cracow became a printing center in 1473 and since 1474 housed the press of a roving printer, Casper. The first permanent printing shop was established in 1503. A printer and militant humanist, Ungler, undertook the pioneer work of printing the first books in Polish. He encouraged scholars to prepare manuscripts for him, correct erratic spelling and establish a uniform orthography. As a result, religious, literary and popular science books were published. Magnificent volumes, liturgical as well as secular, which were adorned with the exquisite art of book illumination, were published in the sixteenth century. The town secretary of Cracow, Baltazar Behem, a pupil of Cracow University, commissioned a book on the Statutes of Cracow Guilds. This *Codex Picturatus* has become a priceless collection of magnificent colored pictures of Cracow's contemporary life. The Reformation, and subsequent Counter-Reformation, did much for the development of writing and printing in the Polish language.

Leonard Coxe, the English humanist who travelled to the Continent as a young man "to learn and earn," spent some time in Poland and left a written description, *De Laudibus Celeberrimae Cracoviensis Academiae* (1518) of his stay, in which he praises the University of Cracow and the high standing of its professors. Also Rudolf Agricola, the Swiss poet, spent a few years teaching at the University.

The middle of the sixteenth century brought important changes to the Universty of Cracow. Its normal expansion was affected by the Reformation which caused a strong scholastic reaction. The University, which, according to the will of its founder, had been international in spirit and very humanistic, reverted to medievalism. Teaching became scholastic and the scope of inquiry narrowed. Although the number of students still remained high (about 19,360), gradually the foreigners left and Polish students as well began to go abroad again, primarily to Italy. One of those who went abroad was Bernard Wapowski, who wrote a continuation of Jan Długosz's *History of Poland* and published in 1526 the first detailed map of Poland. The map was reprinted in foreign atlases up to the the eighteenth century.

Despite its relative decline, the University still continued to contribute to the development of national culture. At the end of the sixteenth century it began to set up throughout the country "Academic Colonies," elementary and secondary schools of lay character which were controlled by the University. The University library was transformed into the first public library in Poland, the *Libraria Publica,* from which books could be borrowed. The oldest record of books borrowed dates to 1540. This library, based on the collection of books of the Collegium Maius, and considered to have about three or four thousand manuscripts by the end of the fifteenth century, later became the finest in all Poland, the Jagellonian Library. Polish Renaissance poetry began in the sixteenth century. The verses of Jan Kochanowski, an alumnus of the University, are recited to this day and the melodies composed at the time for his verses are still sung. In 1543 an orchestra was set up at the King's Chapel and there was also a theater where works were performed in Polish. The medical sciences showed some progress, the number of chairs increasing to four in the sixteenth century and to six in the seventeenth century. The first chair of Anatomy was established in 1604. Many illustrious scholars lived during this period, including, to mention only a few, philologists Maricius, Grzebski and Górski, mathematicians Jan Brożek, and S. Pudłowski (the latter a correspondent of Galileo). Freedom of speech and belief were encouraged and heated discussions of the Reformation and public debates on religion were held between members of all denominations during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. At one of these debates, the King tried in vain to bring Catholics and Protestants together.

However, these years were marked by conflict with the Jesuits, who were doing valuable work in establishing higher schools but who were also striving to control all education. The Jagellonian University fought to maintain its position as a free, progressive institution, but it was weakened by the struggle and soon found itself surpassed by the Jesuits and Piarists in the field of education. Thus, the atmosphere of freedom, which had prevailed at the Jagellonian University, waned with the Counter-reformation and the measures it employed.

The seventeenth and the start of the eighteenth century was a period of intellectual and scientific stagnation for almost all of Europe. Prague University suffered a collapse after the Hussite Wars, and Cracow University barely existed. Wars with the Turks, Cossacks, Muscovites and Swedes raged throughout Poland. Increasing political unrest halted intellectual and cultural progress and brought about a gradual decline of the Polish Commonwealth. The three powers bordering on Poland, Prussia, Russia and Austria, undermined Polsh sovereignty and interfered in the country's internal affairs.

## THE AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND REFORM

At the end of the eighteenth century, as a result of the French Enlightenment, many fundamental reforms and improvements were introduced. In 1773, the Jesuit Order was dissolved by the Vatican. The State took over most of the Jesuit endowment and established the Commission of National Education, which may be described at the first ministry of public education in Europe. The University was freed from clerical control and given financial backing by the State.

The great educational reformer of the time was the philosopher, writer and pedagogue, Hugo Kołłątaj, one of the ablest, most enlightened men Poland had produced. He undertook the complete reorganization of instruction along modern lines. Old programs of study were discarded and new ones put in their place. Kołłątaj's reforms were characterized by the adaptation of instruction to the new needs of society, the introduction of experimental and analytical methods, the support for a closer relationship between theory and practice, and the selection of promising students for promotion. Special emphasis was put on the use of the Polish language which became the language of instruction.

In 1783, the renewed University, called the "Superior School of the Kingdom," was divided into two colleges, the Moral College, comprised of Theology, Law and Literature, and the Physical College. The exact sciences gained prominence and it was at that time that various sciencific establishments, such as the Botanical Garden, the Dissecting Room, Clinic, and the Laboratories of Physics and Chemistry, were founded. The astronomical Observatory, created in 1791 and directed by the great scholar Jan Śniadecki, brought fame to Cracow University again. Thus a new spirit was introduced within the old walls of the Jagellonian University.

This renovation, interrupted by the struggle against Russia and Prussia, was carried out despite the First Partition of Poland in 1772. The famous Constitution of May Third, 1791, the work of enlightened patriots, was proclaimed amidst the worst political conditions. The second of its type, it came after the Constitution of the United States, but preceded the French Constitution by four months.

## THE JAGELLONIAN UNIVERSITY DURING THE PARTITIONS

Polish culture and learning was incorporated into three different state systems. Cracow fell to Austria, who looked upon universities as hotbeds of revolutionary ideas and who, within a short period of time, began to denationalize and Germanize the University. There were

brief intervals of autonomy, after the Congress of Vienna in 1815. The University passed under the control of the "Republic of Cracow," but it was not long before the "protective government" took serious repressive measures. In 1826, a curator was named by the government to head the University, the number of chairs was diminished, and student organizations suffered reprisals. However, despite these obstacles, the University never ceased to be. In 1831, after the November Insurrection and the closing of the Universities of Warsaw and Wilno by the Russians, it became the only institution of higher learning in Poland. There was a University in Lwów, but it was almost completely Germanized at the time. The situation worsened after 1846 when the revolutionary movement was suppressed. Cracow was again incorporated into Austria, the province known henceforth as Galicia, and Germanization of the University reached its peak. All the more prominent professors were removed from their positions and in 1854 German was made the compulsory language of instruction, except for some lectures in Latin.

Only after the defeat of Austria in the Prussian War at Sadowa (Königgrätz) did the Habsburgs seek the support of the non-German elements in the Dual Monarchy. Austrian Poland was granted self-government in 1867 and a new period of revival began for the Jagellonian University. In 1869 its autonomy was re-established and Polish was partially reintroduced. By 1870, the sole language of instruction was again Polish.

## THE PERIOD OF FLOWERING, 1870-1914

After 1870, the Universities of Cracow and Lwów began to freely develop in their own way and to play an increasingly important role in the history of the nation. Cracow served as a haven for students from the Polish provinces under German and Russian domination and as a model of national spirit and patriotism, and University chairs were open to professors from all parts of Poland. In 1873, through a joint effort of Cracow and Lwów scholars, the Academy of Sciences and Letters, the chief seat of learning in Poland, was founded in Cracow. It soon established branches in Paris and Rome, the latter for research in the reopened Archives of the Vatican.

Brilliant historians, jurists, philologists and many others brought distinction at this time to the Jagellonian University. Excellent series in different fields were published, scientific work was organized, and scholars were brought together for consultation on proper methods of research. Polish History, enhanced by the wealth of source material which was made available by the Vatican Archives, was now studied

with the aid of modern methods of research. A monumental work by Karol Estreicher, the *Polish Bibliography,* in twenty-two volumes, was begun. Professor William Rose of Canada writes of Polish science: "It was in the modestly equipped laboratories in the late eighties that two scientists of genius, Z. Wróblewski and K. Olszewski, succeeded in liquefying air in 1883." Private benefactors contributed generously to the inadequately endowed Academy.

This vigorous scholarly activity soon became known to the outside world, although the language barrier made much of the work inaccessible to foreigners. For a time, only philological studies, written in Latin, were known abroad, although *resumés* of Polish papers appeared from time to time in foreign journals. However, as long as Poland was not independent Polish scholars were often labeled as Austrians and credit for their work sometimes went to others. International congresses did not favor the admittance of Polish delegates, and only with difficulty was this concession granted at the International Congress of Historians in Switzerland.

Thus Poland was culturally and intellectually preparing herself for the political independence of which she was still deprived.

In 1900 in Cracow, delegates from all over the world took part in a special celebration which commemorated with great splendor the five-hundredth anniversary of the revival of the University by King Jagiełło. In honor of the greatest alumnus, Nicholas Copernicus, a monument was erected in the courtyard of the Collegium Maius where he studied.

Cracow felt the impact of the 1905 Revolution in Russia. The sudden influx of students from Warsaw, who were fleeing the reprisals which followed the revolutionary movement of 1905 and the boycotting of Russianized schools, stirred the Cracow youth and instilled in them progressive ideas. The new students were received by the community with open arms and given all assistance and support. The influx altered the climate of the old, conservative city and changed the social structure of the University.

## REBORN POLAND, 1918-39

From 1921, after the victorious war with the Bolsheviks, until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, the Jagellonian University enjoyed peace and a period of fruitful activity in reborn Poland. Knowing that their country was free was an enormous incentive to Polish scholars.

The era of industrial science had begun. Research laboratories and

scientific institutes were developed to meet the new needs of society and were subsidized by the State and industry. In 1921, a legal decree granted the University autonomy. It was given the right to pass its own rules, to teach according to its own scientific views, to confer degrees, to administer funds assigned to it, and to appoint professors by consent of the Senate, the University governing body. The decree also recognized scientific research as the University's chief purpose.

New plans and methods of teaching were eagerly introduced and adopted, and efforts were made to establish closer connections between learning and life. In an attempt to modify the University system, which had been following the German pattern, and to bring it closer to the Western European and American type, the master's degree was introduced where formerly there had only been the doctorate. The staff was divided into professors (honorary, full and associate), *docents* and auxiliary members (instructors, assistants and tutors). The Rector, who was head of the University, was elected for three years by a general meeting of professors. Students were admitted upon a certificate of matriculation obtained from a secondary school.

In the interwar years, the Jagellonian University had five faculties: Theology, Law and Administration (including Economics and a school of Political Science), Medicine, Agriculture (including an advanced course on cooperatives), and Philosophy, which was divided into two departments, the Humanities and the Mathematical and Physical Sciences. There were seven Schools within the five Faculties and the University had 136 chairs and institutes, 230 professors, 230 instructors, and 6,000 students, including 1,300 women.

Over 40% of the students received scholarships, loans or allowances. Apart from University scholarships, about 800 talented students were given grants throughout the years by the National Cultural Fund, a governmental body which assisted promising young men and women. Many of these students were sent to foreign universities, chiefly to those in France, England and the United States. The Kosciuszko Foundation in New York City contributed towards the exchange of students and professors and the Rockefeller Foundation was especially helpful in the fields of medicine, natural science and social studies.

In addition to its regular curriculum, the University organized various public lectures, including series of popular lectures which were given in the evening free of charge. These lectures, given in many towns and cities, were heavily attended and much appreciated.

Aside from its many research institutes, the University also established a museum devoted to the history of science. The museum included scientific instruments which had been employed in the past, particularly

those used by the fifteenth century astronomers, and its chief attraction is "The Alchemist's Study," a fullscale facsimile of the kind of workshop used at the time of Copernicus.

Ethnography and archeology were given much attention and Poland, itself, became an important area for pre-historic excavations. English studies had a worthy exponent in Roman Dyboski, Romance in Władysław Folkierski, and Stanisław Wędkiewicz, and Russian in Wacław Lednicki, all of whom maintained close contacts with Western learning. On the other hand, Professor William Rose, the distinguished Canadian scholar, obtained the doctorate in the history of Polish culture at Cracow University with which he was associated for several years. International understanding was also promoted by lectures given abroad by Polish professors. Among others, two scholars of note went to the United States. In 1929, Roman Dyboski, and in 1938, Oscar Halecki, Warsaw historian and Cracow alumnus who later achieved world prominence, went to the United States as visiting professors.

Cracow remained the chief center for studies in Polish History and Law, both of which subjects had brought fame to the University since 1870. A group of specialists brought to light the Polish origins and subsequent Germanization of Silesia (old Polish province, corresponding roughly to the southern part of the Oder-Neisse territory) and there is little doubt that the publication of their findings was one reason for the brutal arrest and deportation of the staff of the University in November, 1939.

Because of its tradition and the importance of its achievements, Cracow University enjoyed great prestige. Its graduates made up much of the teaching staff in the newly opened universities throughout Poland and often its professors filled the highest posts in the State.

During the interwar period, several new University buildings were erected, including a beautiful modern building to house the oldest library in Poland, the Jagellonian Library.

In 1936, the University received the "Polonia Restituta," the highest award given for contributing to the country's culture. An imposing celebration took place in the ancient *Aula* (hall) of the University. A stately, colorful procession walked through the streets of gothic Cracow to the Cathedral. The Rector, royally robed and with cape of ermine, led the procession, followed by the beadles, who carried the sceptre and University insignia, deans and professors in multicolored robes, delegates of learned institutions from all over the world, state and army dignitaries in tunics and plumes, Polish nobility in their seventeenth century colorful attire, foreign envoys in richly adorned uniforms, and students. The memory of this event lasted for many years.

## THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND GERMAN OCCUPATION, 1939-45

The greatest catastrophe of all befell Poland in 1939. For the first time in its history, Cracow University was closed. Hitler's policy aimed at the complete destruction of Polish culture and learning, at the radical extermination of all Poland's leading citizens and scholars. The country was to be turned into a vast labor reservoir for the Reich. The "Polish slave people (Knechtvolk) had no need for education." Governor General Frank, himself, declared: "There will never again be an institution of higher learning in Poland" and "operation" soon followed words.

All high schools and universities were closed. All scientific societies and journals were forbidden. Not a single book or serious article was allowed in print. All libraries were closed. The contents of many libraries, including parts of the precious collection of the Jagellonian Library, were carried off to Germany. Scientific equipment was looted, burnt or destroyed, and research institutes were liquidated. German professors, who arrived from the Reich, were allowed to plunder at will. Whatever seemed of value in museums and collections was taken away to the Reich. Thousands of cases full of artistic treasures and the rarest books were found in Germany after the war and brought back to Cracow. Unfortunately, however, much was lost.

The heaviest blow was struck on November 6, 1939, when, 183 professors, many of them gray-haired, elderly scholars of European renown, were tricked into attending a meeting, at which they were herded together and shipped to concentration camps where a number of them died.

Following is an account of the incident by an eyewitness, Ludwik Landau, the author of the recently published *War and Occupation Chronicle.*

After the German armies entered Cracow on September 6, 1939, the Polish population was represented by the hastily organized Citizens' Committee, headed by Cardinal Adam Sapieha, Deputy Mayor Dr. S. Klimecki, and Professor S. Kutrzeba of the Jagellonian University. At first the Germans tolerated the Committee, but forced it to limit its activities to bringing aid to the population. To help keep alive the national spirit, the University Senate decided to reopen the academic year in November. The Rector notified the army authorities, the generals saw no objection, and some professors quietly returned to work. On October 25, a civilian Governor General was named for the occupied Polish territories. He was Dr. Hans Frank, founder of the Academy of German Law. The Cracow attorneys remembered his visit to Cracow before 1937 and the high opinion he held of Polish learn-

ing, and many were surprised that a man of this sort could cooperate with Hitler. However, an optimist attitude prevailed since Cracow, the cherished old capital city, was spared the bombing.

Then the newly arrived Colonel of the S.S., Dr. Muller, paid a visit to the Rector of the University, Professor T. Lehr-Spławiński, and invited all the professors and members of the staff to a lecture he (Dr. Muller) was giving on "Views of the Reich on the Institutions of Higher Learning" on November 6, at noon, in Hall No. 66. For the sake of the University, the professors decided to attend the lecture, but at a discreet patriotic manifestation, the Senate also decided that the inaugural church service would take place the same morning.

As the professors, both younger scholars and venerable elderly authorities, arrived, almost in a body, they were brutally pushed and kicked into waiting trucks. Amidst the shouts and blows of the guards, the Rector, with head erect, led the dramatic procession down the stately steps which had witnessed so many festive processions. They were shipped to the dreaded concentration camps in Sachsenhausen, many to pay the ultimate price, so "that the Polish nation would never again be capable of putting up a resistance" (Hans Frank, *Diary*). Only those who were sick or who missed the "lecture" were spared. The Jews were singled out and their fate was sealed.

All were kept in unheated, leaky barracks, and forced to sleep on bare floors and submit to sadistic humiliations. They were kept cold and hungry and there was no medicine in the camp. The winter of 1939-40 was particulary severe and many died. The list included Professors S. Estreicher, 72, S. Kołaczkowski, M. Starzewski, J. Smoleński, T. Grabowski, I. Chrzanowski, 74 year old Nestor of the history of Polish Literature, L. Sternbach, prominent Hellenist, K. Kostanecki, doctor "honoris causa" of many European universities, and W. Takliński, Rector of the Mining Academy.

News of the unspeakable crime against the University spread to the diplomats of neutral countries who had remained in Cracow. Through them, information leaked to the intellectual world of the West, causing great indignation. The rectors of the universities in Hungary, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria made appeals to Berlin demanding the immediate release of the professors. The editor of the largest Fascist daily in Italy, *La Stampa,* published big headlines of the incident and Professor Volpi, President of the "Accademia dei Lincei" notified Mussolini, who is believed to have intervened.

Probably the large number of interventions, the danger of international scandal, and the conviction that the arrested men were broken and no longer dangerous, caused the Germans to release some of the

professors in February, 1940, after four months of inhuman treatment, and the rest, who were still alive, in December, 1940. Those who returned were unrecognizable shadows of their former selves. Yet as soon as they returned, they began to reorganize, along with the few professors who were spared deportation, a clandestine university so that the young might not lose contact with learning.

By unanimous consent of teachers and students, Cracow University went underground to function as a secret university. The organization was based on two principles: (1) the professors' work was to be honorary and no fees were to be charged to the students, and (2) studies were to be serious, according to the prewar high level, and degrees were to be conferred according to prewar standards. Places for meetings and seminars had to be changed frequently for fear of being discovered. Often, if a student or teacher did not appear, it was because he was caught on his way in one of the inhuman "manhunts" in which the Nazis excelled. Such a situation resulted in a very closely knit, unique relationship of professors and students, all of whom risked their lives at all times. Yet during the years 1942-45, there were 136 professors teaching, about 800 students studying, and several hundred degrees conferred.

Despite the Nazi repressions, despite the plunder of works of art and rare collections, despite the fact that many professors died in concentration camps—the University lost 110 members of its staff during the war—the University of Cracow survived the hardest trial in its almost six hundred years of existence.

A few professors of the Jagellonian University for the most part they were abroad on scientific trips or attending congresses at the time, were fortunate enough to escape the clutches of Gestapo. The professors remained abroad and taught during the war in places such as the United States, Canada, England and Belgium. Some, including Professor Lednicki, renowned scholar of the history of comparative literature, and Professor W. Folkierski, chose to remain after the war and carry on the traditions of Poland's most ancient university in their adopted countries.

## THE RECENT PERIOD, 1945-1964

In January 1945, the German armies were driven away and as early as March 19th 1945, the University was reopened. The enormous task of reconstruction and regeneration began in the devastated country. Students flocked to the University which thanks to the clandestine instruction during the Nazi oppression, could immediately start to operate. Soon the old Alma Mater was resounding with life and study.

The transformation from the pre-war to the present communist

system brought about drastic changes in the life of the country as well as in the universities.

The main change, conflicting with the old traditions of the University was the strict control, not only of the State, but of the all-powerful Party and the demand for commitment to communism. The decree of October 20th 1947, brought a decisive blow to the autonomous structure of the universities. During the following years, mainly in 1949, the complete reorganization after the pattern of Soviet universities took place. In the system introduced in the Stalinist era, the influence of the Communist Party is exercised by a "delegate" of the Central Committee who is attached to every university and takes part *ex-officio* in all meetings of the Senate and University bodies. Every professor has to belong to the Union of Teachers, and a representative of this Union is a member of the Senate. The teaching system is specially adapted for mass production of professionally trained graduates, but it decreased the traditional opportunities for scholarly pursuit in an atmosphere of academic freedom.

In the years following the War, the University was reorganized several times, and as a result, lost its Faculty of Theology. The Faculty of Medicine has been transformed in 1950 into a separate, independent school: The Academy of Medicine and the Faculty of Agriculture in the Higher School of Agriculture (1954). The University remained the center for the humanities, law and exact sciences.

Teaching of Marxist philosophy became compulsory and passing grades in this subject were decisive for getting a degree. The universities were subjected to communist ideology in every field, particular in the humanities. Polish history has been rewritten along Marxist-Leninist lines, called "the new synthesis of Polish history." The same applied to economics where a new socialist economic thought has been developed. This resulted in a desertion of some disciplines by uncommitted scholars who turned to topics unhampered by politics. Outstanding work is being done in Museology and Archeology (excavations: in Poland, Asia-Palmyre, Egypt), winnig international recognition.

A Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN) was established in Warsaw in 1951, embracing all Polish learned societies (43) and reducing the worthy Cracow Academy to the level of a local branch, although formally it was not dissolved. PAN covers the whole country with a net of organizations; it controls all research work, all existing and newly created societies and institutes, as well as all learned publications. The Secretary General of PAN is the representative of the Communist Party. However, it must be admitted that the work carried out is on a high level. Contacts with the Western learning were almost all cut off.

Undoubtedly, there is in Poland a popularization of higher studies and as university study became tuition-free, it also became accessible to a greater extent than before the War to the worker and peasant classes. But again, the Party line weighed heavily on the selection of students, giving priority to those having the right Party attitude or according to their social strata. This was particularly enforced before October 1956.

The "silent revolution" of October 1956 brought liberalization. Some of the above features have been modified and a more favourable climate for Polish learning and culture came into being. In 1959 contact with the West improved. Exchange of students, postgraduate trips abroad and participation of professors and delegates in international congresses became possible.

With new discoveries and the development of industry, specialization has been greatly developed and large opportunities opened in the scientific and technical field. Several research laboratories have been added to the existing institutes and new ones were formed. A branch of Cracow University has been established in Katowice as recently as September 1963, for teaching of chemistry, mathematics and law (administration). To meet the demand for knowledge, the University expands to extramural students. A net of extension and correspondence courses, evening studies etc., are in operation as University agencies.

The University consists of five Faculties (Law; Philosophy and History; Philology; Mathematics, Physics & Chemistry; and Biology, Geography & Geology). It has eighty six chairs with several Institutes and approximately 160 professors and 344 junior staff members. There were 3,746 students studying in 1959, including 1799 women and 5,249 studying in 1963/4, Of these, approximately 23% studied Law and Administration, 11% Polish History, 10% Polish Language and Literature and 4% Russian Language and Literature. Applicants must pass an entrance examination and be accepted by the Admissions Board. Foreign students come from Asian, African, and few from Latin American and Western countries.

The Library of the University, the "Jagellonian Library," contains the richest collection of old manuscripts and early books printed in Poland. It also contains letters from Western scholars showing close contacts of Polish mediaeval learning with the Western world. The University also possesses an old print shop.

Intensive work of a high caliber is carried on. After the "thaw" of 1956, the University strove to be not only a training place for professional services but, as in the long years of its history, the source of knowledge for purely scholarly reasons.

1964 marks a great jubilee year for the Jagellonian University, the

sixth centennial of its founding in 1364. The commemoration of this great anniversary continues in Poland throughout the year, the climax being the festivities in Cracow on May 12th, the exact anniversary of its charter. At that time, newly erected buildings were officially donated to the University: a Planetarium, a Palm House in the Botanical Garden, physics, chemistry, geology buildings, an Observatory, a new printing shop, sport facilities etc. It is hoped that these new buildings will be gradually filled with up-to-date expensive equipment, apparatus, computers etc., with the help of Poles and foundations from abroad.

The Jubilee celebrations not only commemorate the glorious past, but also mark the beginning of far-reaching plans for future activities. Jubilee publications will appear during the year, among them an extensive history of the Jagellonian University in four volumes. The creative achievements will continue and will be followed up by new developments in learning and science in revived and new centers of research of the University.

Stormy historical events pass around it, political systems alter, times and people change, but the University, the Alma Mater of many Polish learned institutions, will remain a creative body of great spiritual vitality, the source of enlightened ideas and inspiration in times to come the "invigorating spring of learning," to quote the words of its charter.

*Ad multos annos, Alma Mater Jagellonica!*

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