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Honorary Degree for the 14th Dalai Lama

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama received the doctorate honoris causa of the Jagiellonian University in the aula of Collegium Novum on 8 December 2008. The Senate of the JU, having considered the resolution undertaken by the Council of the JU Faculty of Philosophy, conferred the title of honorary doctorate on Dalai Lama in particular recognition of his virtues and merits:

– representing high standards in social and public life,
– his internationally acknowledged moral authority,
– promoting the peaceful resolution of many conflicts,
– significant merits in the development of intercultural dialogue and interreligious relations,
– promoting the attitude of respect and undertaking towards people with different worldviews and religious beliefs,
– peaceful struggle of Tibet’s freedom ad the recognition of the human rights of its people.

The assessments were prepared by Prof. Maria Krzysztof Byrski of the Institute of Oriental Studies of Warsaw University and Prof. Krzysztof Kosior of the Institute of Philosophy of the Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. They focused on the personal qualities and activities of the 14th Dalai Lama, ‘which are a genuine testimony to the breadth and depth of his spirit, not only for the Tibetan Buddhists, but to the rest of us around the world; the qualities, which have made His Holiness into one of the few universally recognised sages of our times.’

They also stressed his altruism, which took its peak form in his attitude towards enemies. The Dalai Lama said, ‘just like the blessing of buddhas, our enemy appears to us and shuts the door to hell. Patience arises as the result of harm done to us by the enemy … the enemy who gives us a chance to practice patience… we should be happy to be given this opportunity and hold our enemies in high esteem.’ His messages would lack in significance and force of conviction if it were not for the personal example of the Dalai Lama, especially his determined treatment of the Chinese as friends. What strikes us is his complete lack of hatred towards the Chinese even when he conveys the unimaginable suffering they have inflicted on the Tibetans, which is a result of his belief that ‘when we hurt our enemy we hurt ourselves.’ The Dalai Lama thinks that ‘enemies play a very important part because we can develop our patience only in relation to them… therefore, an enemy is described as the greatest spiritual friend.’ He also focuses on suffering. ‘The practice of taking on suffering is one of the greatest techniques that control egocentrism… you can develop compassion and thanks to the practice of giving your own happiness to others you develop love.’ Another thread of the Dalai Lama’s thought is his attitude of the non-infliction of violence, ‘Each attempt to solve problems by force leads to disregarding the rights and views of others. The non-violent approach is human because it involves dialogue and understanding in the spirit of reconciliation.’ Prof. Byrski emphasized that those views were announced by ‘a man who, according to our standards, and in view of his nation’s situation is in, would have every right to hate, vengeance and the use of violence.’ He also stressed the Dalai Lama’s attitude towards other religions: his lack of any prejudice, respect for other denominations and firmness of views. Speaking about Christianity the Dalai Lama expressed his admiration for Thomas Merton who ‘was like a strong bridge joining those two very different religious traditions’ and for John Paul II, ‘The Pope is a man for whom I have the utmost respect. He made an impression on me of someone very practical and open-minded, with broad views. I have no doubts that he is a great spiritual leader. Everyone who, like John Paul II, can call his failed assassin his ‘brother’ must be
very spiritually advanced’ as well as for Mother Theresa, ‘I have been struck by her position of absolute humility. From the Buddhist point of view she can be considered to be a bodhisattva.’

In her laudatory speech Prof. Dr. Beata Szymańska, the JU Institute of Philosophy, presented briefly the main facts from the life of Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama. He was born in a small village in Tibet in 1935. According to the Tibetan tradition he was selected as the rightful successor of the 13th lama as a child. He spent his youth in various monasteries, receiving formal education in Buddhist philosophy, from which he graduated with distinction and the academic title, corresponding to the European doctorate. Because of political turmoil he had to leave Tibet in 1959. He went to India and has lived in Dharamsala until today. In 1989, he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his consistence in opposing a violent solution of conflicts, stands for peaceful resolution of crises, tolerance and respect in international relations. Sacrificing the chance of a peaceful monastic life he has announced the message of peace throughout the world and his life. He has travelled the world, meeting the most distinguished and powerful politicians and scientists. As the spiritual leader of the Tibetan nation he talks about his own nation. He believes that we can turn the fate of the world in a better direction, ‘I find many reasons to have faith in human courage and human nature... My life of a fugitive often led me to desperate, even hopeless situations, forcing me to confront an often harsh reality over and over again. Under continuous pressure of circumstances I had to prove my own determination and internal strength. The most important thing was to maintain hope and courage.’

The Dalai Lama is a man of hope and a man of action. He said himself, ‘Our future is based on hope, it is the foundation of success. But if hope does not instigate action it is hardly useful. The real effect is the effect of action and not hope alone.’

Prof. Szymańska also spoke about the academic work of the Dalai Lama. He is an excellent interpreter and commentator of Buddhist philosophy. He commented on the achievements of physics, biology, cosmology and medicine. His books have also been translated into Polish and are offered for studying as part of some JU courses. It is worth adding that the Jagiellonian University is the only university in Poland holding classes on Eastern religion and thought. The Buddhist Middle Way adopted by the Dalai Lama lets him take a balanced position, ‘My main goal is finding harmony, a balance between the external world of material things and internal, spiritual life. Solving the problems of humanity will not be possible without finding the Middle Way between economic growth and internal
human maturity.’ He is interested in the upbringing of young people and ecological issues.

Dalai Lama is an exceptionally modest man. ‘I am just a common Buddhist monk’, he says about himself. At the same time he is a spiritual and political authority, enjoying respect worldwide, even among those who are indifferent towards his religion. He firmly speaks about respect for every individual and nation, the right to freedom and dignity.

Conferring the honorary degree of the Jagiellonian University on the Dalai Lama was not only the expression of our recognition of the man who confirms the truthfulness of his ideals by his whole life but also for all those people and organisations that promote high moral standards for the benefit of other people’s wellbeing and rights.

Thanking for the honorary title the Dalai Lama referred to the figures of Lech Wałęsa and John Paul II, ‘The experiences of the Polish Solidarity taught me a lot. I felt a deep spiritual bond, spiritual brotherhood, with John Paul II from the first moment of our meeting. I admired and respected him.’ He mentioned his positive experiences with Poles, ‘When in 1959 I had to leave my country, when we faced serious problems, two ordinary Polish people helped us. It was a woman whom we called Polish mother and a man who was apparently weak, a short man.’ He spoke about the need of responsibility, the source of which is a ‘good heart.’

After the official ceremony there was a press conference. Norman Davies, the distinguished British historian, asked him an unusual question about his parents. He received a simple answer, ‘My mother was calm and full of compassion. She did not have any education. I never saw her irritated. But my father did not have as much patience as my mum.’

Finally, the Dalai Lama met the academic community in Auditorium Maximum (over 1,000 people). He stressed that the ability to conduct dialogue, regardless of the differences, was the most important and fundamental ability, which had to be the basis to solve all conflicts. He also warned against having too many material things. Answering the question what Poles could do for Tibet, the Dalai Lama said that ‘the most important thing is to remember to speak about Tibet and try to learn as much as possible about what has been going on there. This peaceful fight is what we can always do and is of great significance.’ He emphasized that his visit had no political dimension.

M. Kantor

Integration meeting of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Programme

On 4-6 March 2009, the Jagiellonian University hosted the integration meeting of this year’s grant-holders of the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Programme. 49 people from five academic centres in Poland: Lublin, Poznań, Warsaw, Wrocław and Kraków met in Collegium Novum. Special guests included Mr Andrzej Dakowski, Director of the Polish-American Fulbright Commission and Mr Jacek Michalowski, director of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, that financed the whole event.

The main goal of the Freedom Foundation is to advance democracy, civil society, equal opportunity and market economy in Poland, as well as share Polish experiences in transformation with Central and Eastern European countries.

The participants listened to two lectures: Prof. Zdzisław Mach, the Director of the JU Institute of European Studies) who spoke about Polish foreign politics in the context of the European Union and Prof. Piotr Sztompka (Institute of Sociology) who spoke about the ambivalence of the post-communist transformation. Apart from lectures the participants visited the historical centre of Kraków and the salt mine in Wieliczka near Kraków.

It has been for seven years that the Lane Kirkland Scholarship Programme has offered grants for young scientists, managers and journalists from the republics of Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, Kazakhstan and Moldova) to study at the Jagiellonian University for one year.

Krzysztof Zajas

Participants of the meeting
On 16 March 2009 the conference ‘General Władysław Sikorski History and death of the outstanding politician and soldier’ was organised by the Chair of Forensic Medicine and The Chair of Radiology of Collegium Medicum of the Jagiellonian University, the Institute of Forensic Expertise and the Kraków Photographic Association. At the same time there was the photographic exhibition entitled ‘Unfulfilled Poles’ Hopes’. During the conference the JU scientists presented the results of the research carried out for the last several months by the teams that took part in the exhumation of the remains of General Sikorski. In fact, Sikorski’s body had never undergone a real medical examination. On July 4, 1943, while General Sikorski was returning from an inspection of the Polish forces deployed in the Middle East, he was killed, together with his daughter, his Chief of Staff, Tadeusz Klimecki, and seven others, when his plane crashed into the sea 16 seconds after takeoff from Gibraltar at 23:07 hours. He was subsequently buried at the Polish War Cemetery in Newark-on-Trent, England. On September 22, 2009, Sikorski’s remains were exhumed and transferred to the royal crypts at Wawel Castle in Kraków. Other than to confirm the identity of the remains, no forensic examination was made. On 25 November 2009 Sikorski’s body was exhumed to investigate the circumstances of his death.

During the conference the Polish investigators concluded that there was no evidence Sikorski was murdered. He died because of serious injury of his head. The injury could have been caused by the plane crash. The genetic and anthropological autopsy of the body confirmed that the remains found in the general’s sarcophagus in Wawel Castle in Kraków were that of Sikorski. Thirty-four X-rays taken of the body revealed fractures in the left eye socket and the forehead. There were also major fractures in the ribs and clavicle, as well as in the right hand and leg. Experts have excluded strangulation, since the hyoid bone was not damaged. No traces of poison were found in the body, either.

Prof. Aleksander Skotnicki delivered a lecture on General Władysław Sikorski as a Polish patriot, heroic soldier, talented commander and outstanding statesman. Below we publish the text of his talk.

**GENERAL WŁADYSŁAW SIKORSKI as seen by his contemporaries**

Władysław Eugeniusz Sikorski, later army general, Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief, was born on 20 May 1881 in Tuszów Narodowy near Mielec in the territory of Galicia, which at that time was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was one of four children born to Tomasz Sikorski, an organist and teacher in the local school and Emilia Albertowicz–Wawrowska.

Sikorski’s children became orphaned soon because Tomasz fell ill and died at the age of 43. Emilia Sikorska earned a living mainly from dressmaking, sewing for the Jędrzejowicz family. Additionally, she delivered mail.

The director of the Male Teacher’s Seminar in Rzeszów which young Władysław attended, remembered him as follows:

> A young boy at the age of 16 or 17 arrived at the seminar. Soon he was in focus. First of all, he was exceptionally handsome. A modestly, but carefully dressed boy with fair hair, with beautiful curls, cornflower-blue eyes and ideally regular features… Tackful, humble, calm, always very polite, his voice was pleasant and his movements were deft. He was the first in learning and not the least in physical achievements. His name was Władysław Sikorski; he was a son of a widow from Hżyżne near Rzeszów.

Stanisław Kot, a student of the University of Lvov, wrote:

> He was a tall and well-proportioned man, fair-haired, extremely handsome, with an open, cheerful but strong look, with a winning way of every gesture, friendly and serious in every word... wherever he appeared he was in focus.

His involvement in various organisations, perfect looks and skilful speeches made him very popular.

Sikorski reached mastery in constant clashing with the commanders-in-chief (of the Austrian army) who many a time gave commands that were most impossible to carry out, not because they were malicious but they were limited in their understanding of Polish relationships. He indefatigably wrote memorials. If one memorial did not help he wrote another one and yet another one. If no memorial of his was successful he went himself... he knocked, convinced and gave evidence as long as he attained his goals. He succeeded in having a stupid order withdrawn and a necessary decree issued.

Konstanty Srokowski, Secretary General of the Supreme National Committee (NKN).

Sikorski spoke with a marvellous, winning way of simplicity, sincerity and clarity. He controlled the audience completely. Such people have not been seen here.

Izabela Moszczyńska, publicist and employee in the NKN office in Warsaw.
He is disciplined and loyal. You can always count on him. And he has a unique organisational skill, big mobility, zeal to work and social characteristics that make people like him and through which he wins hearts for himself and the cause.

Jan Hupka, MP and member of NKN.

In the difficult conditions of the summer withdrawal in 1920 when the recently regained independence was endangered, when many civilians and military officers were overwhelmed by doubt, Sikorski was helped by his inborn energy and optimism.

The task that General Sikorski was given in the Battle of Warsaw was loaded with big responsibility and was undoubtedly the most difficult task in his military career until then. His role in the battle has always been very positively evaluated.

Few generals would have been able to carry out a similar operation, keeping a cool head, perseverance and such strong spirit.

General Maxim Weygand, a chief of the French military mission in Poland in 1920.

On 16 December 1922 the first constitutionally elected President of the Republic of Poland Gabriel Narutowicz was assassinated. The atmosphere in the country was very dense. There was a fear of riots. In this situation the Speaker of the Parliament Maciej Rataj proposed Sikorski to become Prime Minister. He appointed Sikorski prime minister and Minister of Ministry Affairs. One of the first decisions of the new Prime Minister was to impose marshal law in Warsaw fearing national riots.

Taking the steering wheel at such a moment – he wrote in his appeal to the nation – I have decided to defend ruthlessly the legal order and internal peace.

The circulatory letter to the governors of the voivodships was formulated in a similar spirit. The applied means were effective and people’s moods were soothed in a relatively short time. The indicator of Sikorski’s big popularity was his candidacy to the office of Poland’s President. But finally the dignity was given to Stanisław Wojciechowski.

Nominated by the Council of Ambassadors on 28 September 1939 General Sikorski, as the highest ranking officer, took command over the Polish Army, which was being formed in France. This army was the beginning of the infantry division, which had been formed already in August 1939 in accordance with the agreement between Poland and France.

Sikorski is an incarnation of vivid energy and action; one can see his great self-confidence and outstanding intelligence. And he believes in France, its military power as he believes in our providence – Poland’s providence.

Colonel Leon Mitkiewicz., military attaché in Kowno.

His characteristics as a political leader are: winsome appearance, betraying male energy, communicativeness; however, he also has weaknesses but as these are very Polish they win his countrymen’s sympathy: hastiness connected with lack of revengefulness, tendency to boastfulness (together with natural generosity and personal courage), easy to compliment people but at the same time easy to criticise impulsively because of a given situation or for occasional aims. The way he – General Sikorski – is he is a 100% Polish.

Edward Raczyński, Polish Ambassador to Great Britain.
Undoubtedly, General Sikorski belonged to outstanding personalities, eminent, gifted with various talents, indefatigable energy, dynamism, clear thinking – thus he was predestined to great deeds, to top leadership. But having been so generously gifted by nature General Sikorski was devoid of dictatorship drives (rowdy), desire to impose ruthlessly his will to all people. He could work and wanted to work in a team, imposing his ideas, concepts and will by convincing, teaching and persuading people.

Colonel Marian Romeyko, military attaché in Rome.

For us, prisoners and Soviet Gulag prisoners from the years 1939-1941, which were so tragic for Poland, the name of General Sikorski had a special meaning. The news that almost miraculously reached the walls of our prisons and forced labour camp from time to time that Sikorski was alive and active was our hope. This was not only some name but it was a symbol. Poland, the army, further fight against the enemies were in him, and finally, what appealed to us most: hope for rescue and freedom.

General Klemens Rudnicki, deputy head of the Headquarters of the Polish Army in the USSR.

We held Sikorski in the highest esteem. We regarded him as an excellent statesman, the most outstanding one of all living leaders whom the war expelled from the European continent.

William Strang, undersecretary of state in the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs, after Sikorski’s death.

He deserved the highest laurel, not as a statesman, diplomat and even commander although he showed outstanding talents in each of these fields and he earned superior merits, but as an inspired and steadfast commander in his fight for independence during our darkest hours.

Colonel Włodzimierz Onacewicz, military attaché in Washington.

**Exhibition of manuscripts**

**Beethoven: Nature and Culture**

One of the accompanying events of the 13th Ludwig van Beethoven Festival in Poland was the exhibition of manuscripts entitled: ‘Beethoven: Nature and Culture’, opened on 28 March – 10 April 2009 in the Jagiellonian University Library. The official opening was held on 27 March by JU Rector Prof. Karol Musioł, Mrs Elżbieta Penderecka, the director of the 13th Ludwig van Beethoven Festival and Prof. Zdzisław Pietrzyk, Director of the Jagiellonian Library. The opening ceremony was graced by a short concert of two eminent Polish chamber music performers: Agata Szymczewska (violin) and Marian Sobula (piano).

All the autographs presented at the exhibition come from the collection of the former Preußische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and are now preserved at the Jagiellonian Library. ‘The items exhibited present the variety of inspirations that have accompanied the production process of the musical work. Inspirational masterpieces of literature, particularly those by Johann Wolfgang Goethe, whose art and personality have had a profound impact on Beethoven and Mendelssohn, are reflected in songs by the former (such as *Mit einem gemalten Band*) and in the latter’s *Die erste Walpurgisnacht*, we read in the exhibition catalogue.

This year’s exhibition had an additional aspect. It related to the anniversaries associated with Georg Fridrich Haendel (250th death anniversary), Joseph Haydn (200th death anniversary) and Felix Bertholdy-Mendelssohn (200th birth anniversary).

M. Kantor
The International Project on Judicial Independence

The International Conference on International Standards of Judicial Independence: Comparative Analysis and Challenges of Implementation was held on 25-26 November 2008 at the Jagiellonian University. It was organised by the JU Centre for the Study of Foreign Law, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Cambridge University, UK, with the support of the Ministry of Justice of Poland and Sacher Trust Funds, Mizock Chair, Jacobson Foundation. The welcome speeches were delivered by Prof. Karol Musiol, Rector of the Jagiellonian University, Prof. Krystyna Chojnicka, Dean of JU Faculty of Law and Administration, Dr. Michael Karayanni, Director of Michael and Harry Sacher Institute of Comparative Law and Legislative Research, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Dr. Anat Scolnicow, Deputy Director, Centre of Public Law, University of Cambridge.

The lectures focused on the relationship between constitutional courts and supreme courts, judiciary independence in Poland, implementations of the international standards of judicial independence, independence of the judiciary as a civil right of citizens, the international standards of judicial independence: the normative cycle of national and international law on judicial independence, comparative analysis of judicial independence with a focus on method and length of judicial appointments in national and international courts, models of responsibility for administration of justice as well as discipline of judges and standards of judicial conduct.

It is worth mentioning the background and history of the project on judicial independence. During the discussions between the colleagues from the University of Cambridge and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem it was decided to launch an international project on judicial independence. The project received the support of the Harry and Michael Sacher Institute for Comparative Law and the special research reinforcement programme of the Sacher Institute funded by the Jeremy and John Sacher Charitable Trust, the Audrey Sacher Charitable Trust. It was also supported by the Daniel Jacobson Foundation and the Phillip P. Mizock and Estelle Mizock Chair. The International Project on Judicial Independence organised the First Jerusalem Conference in June 2007 focussing on judicial independence in international law. This conference was co-chaired by Professor Shimon Shetreet of the Hebrew University and Prof. James Crawford of the University of Cambridge. The next conference was held on 30.11-2.12.2007 in the Zurich Area in Vadouz. The conference was hosted by a local organising committee chaired by HE Advocate Markus Buechel. The co-chairs of the conference were: Professor Shimon Shetreet, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Professor Christopher F. Forsyth, University of Cambridge. Professor Marcel Storme, emeritus professor, Ghent University, former President of the World Association of Procedural Law, was the leader of the discussions. The task of the conference was to approve a draft of the revised standards of judicial independence. This draft was developed by the conference in discussions led by Professor Storme, based on a draft prepared by Prof. Shetreet for the deliberation of the group of the experts, taking part in the conference. The third conference of the International Project on Judicial Independence, devoted to the discussion of judicial independence and the constitutional position of the judiciary, was held again in Jerusalem on March 18-20, 2008. The conference participants reviewed and approved the revised International Standards proposal that was prepared by the special conference in Zurich.

Within the framework of collaboration between the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Jagiellonian University Professor Shimon Shetreet conducted a course on law culture and religion at the JU Faculty of Law and Administration in the winter semester 2008/09. The course examined the central themes relative to law culture and religion in comparative perspectives. Among other topics the course included the following issues: the foundations of the culture of peace: political, economic, cultural and religious peace; water and peace; the challenge of equality in multicultural society; the judicial challenges in times of crisis: judicial review of decisions in matters of national security; the protection of religious liberty; limitations on the freedom of religion and conscience balancing the interests of public order and freedom of religion; models of relations of state and church; exemptions on grounds of religion and conscience; customs in a multi-cultural society; religious courts and judges in the Middle East; resolving disputes between churches and in holy places of a number of religions or different denominations; the relationships between the Holy See and Israel in the context of the historical statements of the Vatican on the theological approach to Judaism; women, equality and religion; secular legislation of religious norms; Israel as a Jewish and democratic State; kosher rules.

J. Kobierzyńska
Centre for the Study of Foreign Law
New buildings of the Faculty of Management and Social Communication

5,000 students began their summer semester in the new buildings of the Faculty of Management and Social Communication at the new JU campus. They joined 2,000 students whose institutes had already been moved to the campus. In a few years’ time there will be ca. 15,000 students studying at the campus.

The new building is the most modern academic complex in Poland. Simultaneously, it can hold 5,500 students in comfortable conditions. The quality of the functional-architectural solutions match the highest European standards. In the building there is a professional television studio (with film cameras, projectors, direction room, editing room, make-up room and a photo laboratory), which can also fulfill the role of a cinema hall with 100 unfolded seats. Moreover, there are experimental workshops equipped with the doubled mirrors or modern EEG apparatus for the use of applied psychology students.

The library (2,810 sq metres) has the form of a two floor rotunda. It has a lift for the disabled and even workplaces for the blind. There are 100 computers and wireless Internet in the library.


M. Kantor

JU facts and figures for 2008/09

Key figures
Language of instruction: Polish
Faculties: 15
(all faculties award doctor’s degrees)
Fields and studies: 141
Types of studies: Bachelor’s (3 years), Master’s (2 years), Master’s (5 years: law, medicine, pharmacy, psychology), Doctoral (4 years) and postgraduate non-degree studies.
The University also offers summer programmes and Polish language courses.

University staff
Total: 6,847
Academic staff: 3,657
- 1,010 professors and associate professors
- 112 visiting professors
(from Germany, the U.S.A., France, Israel, Ukraine, etc)

Students in the academic year 2008/2009
Total: 50,447
- Bachelor (three years) – 15,588
- Master (two years) – 8,509
- Master (five years) – 21,214
- Doctoral (four years) – 2,174
- Postgraduate non-degree studies (two-three semesters) – 2,962
Including:
international students: 2,703

ERASMUS LLP in 2008/2009
- 814 agreements
- 400 incoming students
- 801 outgoing students
- 150 teaching staff mobility
- 78 courses in English for incoming students

Degree programmes in English and German in 2008/09
19 programmes with 641 foreign students
www.uj.edu.pl/ISOffice/courses_foreign_en.html
Agreements of co-operation

Currently, the Jagiellonian University co-operates with 187 institutions of higher education from 44 countries. The co-operation is realised on the basis of 106 agreements on the university level, 49 agreements on the faculty level (including 34 agreements signed by Collegium Medicum) and 32 agreements on the institute level.

In 2008, the Jagiellonian University signed 19 new agreements.

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<th>Country</th>
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In 2008 the bilateral exchange embraced 16 countries and 191 people.

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<th>Country</th>
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<td><strong>113</strong></td>
<td><strong>78</strong></td>
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On the fifth day of the month of Tewet, in the year 5769 according to the Jewish calendar, (1 January 2009), at a quarter to midnight in local Krakow/Polish time, Henryk Halkowski, a man of outstanding intellect, died of a sudden heart attack.

The first biographies and obituaries, made in a hurry, most often described Henryk using a few words: by profession an architect and philosopher, but by avocation a writer, historian, translator, essayist, expert on the Jewish district of Kazimierz without whom Kazimierz would never be the same. On this occasion people quoted Griegorij Kanonicz who wrote about Henryk, ‘Kraków does not exist without Halkowski and Halkowski does not exist without Kraków.’

Certainly, many things can be added to this concise information about the man who was a legend in his life or even an icon, collecting the legends about Kazimierz and its Jews himself. But he wrote very little about himself although careful reading of his texts will tell much more about their author.

He was born in Kraków on 27 December 1951. His father came from Łódź and his mother came from Vienna. They met in Kraków after the war. Henryk’s father, Stanisław Halkowski (actually Salomon Hauchman, 1910-1977), got married before the war (in 1939) but it was too short for him and his wife to have children because they both were put in the camp in Płaszów (a district of Kraków). Then they parted and she probably remained in the camp in the suburbs of Kraków and died there. He was sent to Skarżysko-Kamienna and then to Częstochowa. In both places he worked in the branches of the factory-camp belonging to the German ammunition concern ‘Hasag’ (Hugo Schneider Aktiengesellschaft – Leipzig). Probably towards the end of 1944 the Germans transported them, together with other prisoners – forced workers – to Germany, in the vicinity of Buchenwald, when they were evacuating the factory from the endangered territory. After the war had ended he returned to Poland, to Kraków, but he did not find any survivors from his family. Soon he changed his name polonizing it to Halkowski.

Henryk’s mother, Salomea Engelberg (1915-1993), was born in Vienna. Her mother, Karolina Geminder, came from Jasło. During her childhood Salomea’s family moved from Wallenstein Street in the capital of Vienna to Tarnobrzeg where Henryk’s grandfather was to possess a bookstore, the only bookstore in the vicinity. Salomea decided to study law in Kraków but she gave up the idea having heard the rumours about the anti-Semitic armed gangs and assaults on the Jews who wanted to apply to the university there. Therefore, she made a wrong decision to study at the school of commerce in Warsaw. She was there when the war broke out. She returned immediately to Tarnobrzeg, to her parents. His family resolved to go to the East, to the territories occupied by the Soviet Union. They reached Lvov. From there they moved to various places in Siberia, including Asino, and finally settled in Kuban. When the victorious Soviet troops conquered the Third Reich army they had the chance to return to Poland. Hersz Baruch Engelberg with his daughters Salomea and Felicia (Fela) and his son Artur (born in 1939) came to the western Polish lands and the remaining children of Hersz Baruch, Nissen and Perla, as well as the husband of Felicja Henryk Szenberg were killed during the occupation.

Henryk’s parents met in Kraków and when they decided to get married their religious wedding was held under the chupa. According to Henryk the traditional character of the ceremony was to bring joy to the Orthodox grandfather, like the visits of the young couple in the synagogue on the occasions of important Jewish feats. Both Henryk’s father and mother did not belong to religious people since both were declared and active communists. During his childhood Henryk learnt many things about Judaism from his grandfather who spent whole days with him while his parents were at work. He was named Henryk (Hersz) to honour both of his grandfathers Hersz Baruch Engelberg and Icchak Hersz Hauchman. He took his love for books after his mother’s father who owned a bookstore and after his father who worked in the Publishing House ‘Dom Ksiazki’ as well as after his ancestors – well-known second-hand booksellers in Odessa. However, as he used to joke, there was some difference in this love for books, ‘they bought and sold these books but I only buy books.’

Furthermore, the first expeditions of Henryk from his apartment in Sławkackiego Avenue to the district of Kazimierz were connected with his grandfather Hersz Engelberg. His visits to the synagogue and various meetings, especially with the shoychet (Jewish ritual slaughterer) remained in Henryk’s memory for a long time. It was during his childhood that his grandfather, who himself was a dedicated patriot, used to repeat to Henryk that there were two most important things for him – firstly, being a Jew and secondly, being a Polish Jew. One of the very few pictures with Jewish children from the 1950s gives testimony to this stage of his life. Soon afterwards Henryk began attending a secular elementary school in Kraków, which limited his walks and time with his grandfather to a considerable extent. His grandfather died in 1962. The next stage of Henryk’s education was the King John III Sobieski Grammar School, which he graduated in 1969.

After 1956 his aunt and her son Artur went to Israel. It was not common to admit that one was Jewish, which applied to schools too. Henryk claimed that there were three other Jewish pupils in the grammar school that he did not know about. When
the anti-Semitic battle began in 1967 teachers told pupils not to have anything to do with it. Henryk realised that the possible decision to leave Poland did not depend on him but on his parents. Both parents experienced the anti-Semitic feelings to a smaller or bigger extent. Henryk’s father was moved from the executive board of ‘Dom Książki’ to the bookstore but his mother was still the director of the financial department of the firm ‘Biprostal’ in Kraków.

By profession Henryk was an architect but he also studied philosophy. He finished architecture at the Technical University in Kraków in 1978. He also began studying philosophy at the Philosophical-Historical Faculty of the Jagiellonian University in 1974. However, he interrupted his studies in 1979 and a few years later he decided to continue and finally, he received a Master’s degree in philosophy with specialisation in teaching in 1986.

During his philosophical studies Henryk began discovering his Jewish identity anew, reading more and more books and meeting people who had similar experiences of the Holocaust. As he admitted himself he knew little about the occupation since the generation of his parents did not talk about it a lot. The change happened only in the 1970s but by then neither his father nor grandfather was alive. He heard his mother’s stories about the fates of the Jews who were forced to go to Siberia. Slowly Henryk amended the information by reading various publications about the history of the Polish Jews that began to be published.

It seems that Henryk’s visit to Israel in 1980 was a turning point in his views concerning Judaism and Jewish life in Poland. His stay of several months in the Jewish state meant learning Hebrew at Ulpan and physical work in a kibbutz as well as meeting his cousin Artur, who left Poland in the 1950s. After having returned from Israel he began studying the history of Jews and religious texts in a more intensive way. After the Social-Cultural Jewish Society had been reactivated (the headquarters of the Kraków branch was in Sławkowska Street) he regularly attended its meetings, together with Jerzy Kichler, who lived temporarily in Kraków then. In the 1990s Henryk Halkowski began attending the synagogue and entering into relationships with various people who belonged to the Jewish community and with those who like him found their Jewish identity anew or had just found out that they were Jewish.

Towards the 1980s, when it was increasingly common to talk about Jewish issues, the first festival of Jewish culture and a scientific conference were organised. Henryk Halkowski could not miss them. Later he made a symbolic entrance to the times of the Third Republic of Poland. All his friends and those who read his articles carefully remember the story about when he was attacked in the main market square in 1989 by a group who read his articles carefully remember the story about when the time was passing away. At the same time he was a phenomenal guide to Kraków, an encyclopaedia of legends and stories related first of all to Kazimierz and to the whole city. It was him that shared his knowledge about history with the Jews who travelled to Poland ‘in search of their roots’. And it was him that got irritated when they kept asking him why he did not leave Poland, claiming that this country was not a place for real Jews.

He had many foreign friends and they might have won him as their friend as well. He shared his knowledge with them and he learnt from them what he could not learn from the local Jews. The fact that he had not seen some people for a couple of years did not disturb him to discuss a topic as if the topic was interrupted only a while ago. And the talks concerned history, modern philosophy, cats he had and current problems of the Jewish district that was changing its character. It is not without reason that Yale Strom, the American musician and film maker, called Henryk ‘mayor of Kazimierz’.

When asked what he did Henryk answered with his inherited sense of humour, quoting the anecdote, ‘Once Franz Fiszer (Franciszek Fiszer) was asked what his profession was and he responded that he was a metaphysician. When asked what metaphysicians did he reacted speaking quickly that they did nothing. ‘And what would happen if all people did nothing?’ , ‘Oh, no! How could all people do something so difficult?’"

The funeral of Henryk Halkowski was held on Monday 5 January 2009 at 12.00 in the Jewish cemetery in Miodowa Street in Kraków. In spite of frost and snow it gathered many of his friends, acquaintances and sympathizers from Kraków and from Warsaw, New York, London and Jerusalem. There were also minor winsome paradoxes, which during his life Henryk applied to himself pointedly, for example the rabbis’ debate on the Jewish name Henryk, ‘„Cwi Hersz or Hersz Cwi?”

Edyta Gawron, Department of Jewish Studies

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1 Henryk Halkowski, Żydowskie życie, Wydawnictwo Austeria Kraków 2003, p. 144.

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moja dusza  my soul
odmawia pociechy refuses consolation
wiedzy knowledge
wędruje tedy nocą so it wanders during the night
po drogach ojców on forefathers’ ways

Henryk felt an heir of the history of Polish Jews and in particular the Kraków Jews, recollecting sometimes about a kind of metaphysical conviction about the obligation to write about the fates of Jewish people and the cultural heritage that the followers of Moses contributed to Poland’s history.

For numerous years, literally till his last hours, he was actively involved in the Social-Cultural Jewish Society in Poland and in the Jewish community of Kraków. His book ‘Żydowskie życie’ [Jewish Life] published in Kraków in 2003 by the Publishing House Austeria, which he co-created, depicts his observation, activities and fascination of the world that was passing away. Herbert’s poem has the following verses:

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[Translation of Herbert’s poem 'po drogach ojców']

moja dusza  my soul
odmawia pociechy refuses consolation
wiedzy knowledge
wędruje tedy nocą so it wanders during the night
po drogach ojców on forefathers’ ways

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“Change” has been a popular buzzword recently. The Centre for European Studies marked the change of guard in US politics by organising, in cooperation with the American Consulate, a guest lecture given by Christoph von Marschall, the US correspondent with the German Tagesspiegel newspaper, a biographer of the new American president and a close observer of his election campaign. In a highly entertaining and insightful lecture Dr von Marschall, who speaks fluent Polish and spent some time studying at the Jagiellonian University, gave his thoughts on the likely impact of the new era on Poland and Europe, as well as answering questions on a range of other related issues.

This was the latest in our CES Open Lectures series. Other guest presentations in the autumn semester included an appearance by Jeff Haynes of London Metropolitan University, who gave a well-received lecture entitled Religion and Politics in a Global Perspective, and Beata Czajkowska, the IMESS Erasmus Mundus visiting scholar, who discussed her research on the subject of the Polish search for identity in the European Union. Katarzyna Zielińska, International Programmes Coordinator at CES, explains that this series has a twofold benefit for our programme. “Along with the study trips that we organise, we hope that these guest lecturers will give students the opportunity to stay updated on developments and research in the field of European studies, as well as creating a forum for exchanging ideas and discussing or commenting on current developments related to European affairs. This can also serve as an inspiration for their own research and MA thesis.”

For the spring semester we will see further visits from guests including Paolo Dardanelli, a political scientist and coordinator of the MA in European Governance international double award programme at the University of Kent, which is run in conjunction with CES.

Change (for the good, and not just for change’s sake) is also something which we aspire to in terms of international relationships. In the coming academic year we are pleased to announce that we will be launching a new programme getting underway, entitled Europeanisation and Governance in Central and Eastern Europe. This scheme, which is to be structured around a new Masters specialisation, is supported by funds awarded by the Polish Foundation for the Development of the Education System, as part of Measure V – Development of Polish Higher Education Institutions, and will be run in cooperation with the ARENA Centre for European Studies at the University of Oslo. New courses will be offered related to the various dimensions of Europeanisation and governance: Theorising European integration, Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) countries in the transforming Union; Foreign and International Relations in CEE facing CFSP/ESDP; Europeanisation and transformation of collective identity; and Gender democracy in CEE. For Dr Zielińska, this is an exciting new project which responds to several key needs, “It will increase educational potential and help to develop the programmes taught in English at the Jagiellonian University, as well as widening the existing cooperation between partners in terms of seminars, teaching and training, and we will also be producing academic publications containing texts for use in teaching within the new specialisation”.

A particular aim of this cooperation, she goes on, is to systematise the knowledge of processes of Europeanisation and democratisation in Central and Eastern Europe, integrating the areas of research and teaching, which are still often
Prof. Jan Błoński in memoriam

Years ago Janusz Sławiński wrote an article entitled Za co powinniśmy kochać Jana Błońskiego [What should we love Jan Błoński for?] in ‘Teksty’. In those times it was almost obvious. But today? When the hard, incurable illness excluded the critic from active participation in literary life for years; when young people do not sometimes know his name and what’s more his figure that was so characteristic and unique? But one must still love and admire Błoński because we are living, often without realising it, in a world of literary values that he prepared for us and confirmed by his authority but we do not know it now, or perhaps, seduced by novelties, we have simply forgotten about it.

He began his literary activities in Stalin’s times, finishing his Polish studies at the Jagiellonian University as one of the most talented disciples of Kazimierz Wyka, a member of the splendid ensemble that was created by the representatives of the so-called Kraków school of literary critics: Jerzy Kwiatkowski, Ludwik Flaszen, Andrzej Kijowski, Konstanty Puzya. It is true that some members of that circle read Marx but it was also desirable to learn from Gombrowicz and Miłosz. In those days Błoński wrote a booklet about Gałczyński – completely devoid of any traces of the obligatory politgramota. Soon a bigger book dedicated to the contemporary poetry ‘Poeci i inni’ [Poets and Others] was published and in 1961 there was one of the most important critical manifestations of this generation ‘Zmiana warty’ [The Changing of the Guard], revised and enlarged in the 1970s under the characteristically changed title, ‘Odmarsz’ [The March-off]. Would that have been the end of Błoński’s activities as the critic of novelties? Perhaps it would if you considered only his books. But Błoński wrote hundreds of reviews, today often lost in newspapers. He also participated in the juries to judge the most important literary awards: firstly, in the Kościelski Foundation, then in the Nike contest. And this is the first evidence that we are living in the literary reality designed by Błoński: the awarded writers in the times when his opinion was decisive in the jury of the Kościelski Foundation are the leaders of the Polish literature: Janusz Anderman, Stefan Chwin, Jerzy Pilch, Paweł Huelle, Olga Tokarczuk, Andrzej Stasiuk, Marcin Świetlicki, Tadeusz Slobodzianek, Marzanna Kielar, Jacek Podsiadło – they were captured by the infallible hearing of Błoński and awarded when they were only authors of one or two books. Since an outstanding critic is the one that can discern the future potential of a writer from often unimpressive material.

As a critic Błoński was extremely sensitive to the value of literature – intellectual, moral, artistic. Therefore, he could not confine himself to those writers who were just to appear in the literary scene. He chose to pursue an academic career partly because – as he said – he could do what he most wanted. And these were the great personalities, treated separately in Poland. As a result students will have an insight into the newest theories and research in the field and chance to deepen their knowledge in the dynamically changing region of Central and Eastern Europe. “Our aim is to make this the ideal programme for all people interested in this region”, she says.

Ben Koschalka

The Centre for European Studies will be accepting applications for the new MA specialisation as well as from outstanding applicants to other programmes over the coming months. Please see www.ces.uj.edu.pl for more information.

Prof. Jan Błoński

the top world ranking artists. He found them in Witkacy, Gombrowicz, Miłosz, Mrożek. He dedicated many inspiring, pioneering works to each of them and later these works were transformed into separate monographs. In the case of these writers we ‘speak like Błoński’ in our interpretations often without realising that since it was him that created the ABC of terms to describe their literary outputs. He took us through our first difficulties that readers experienced while dealing with those really complex multilayer literary works. ‘Dialektyka odrzucenia i przyswojenia’ (Gombrowicz), the opposition of ‘a know-all’ and ‘boor’ (Mrożek), the typology of Witkacy’s
stage figures – this is only a part of this intellectual contribution Błoński made into the critical studies of the Polish masterpieces in the 20th century.

Błoński used to speak about literature, even the most complicated works, plainly, colourfully, using an energetic style, at the same time never losing sight of ‘cavernous depths’. He liked joking, saying that a literary critic or a researcher-specialist in literature dealt with nothing more than ‘summarizing’ works. But this ‘summarizing’ was the domain of special art. The work Błoński ‘related’ opened itself, betrayed its secrets, became clear in all its complexity and as far as possible understandable and also related to other works of the same author and to the works written by other authors it became one voice, a voice in the dialogue of people and cultures. Naturally, one cannot reveal all darkness of some work in this way. In fact, mystery is the true sex-appeal of literature. But when mysteriousness needs rigour, visiting what we do not know, some clear contour. Błoński was a real master of the art of showing and defining mysteries and paradoxes of literature.

The interesting thing is that like many outstanding critics-innovators he did not want to deal only with the literature of his own epoch. Consequently, he reached for the works of Sep-Szarzyński, which he reinterpreted differently than the specialists in old Polish literature, using the modern techniques of literary criticism. The result was his habilitation dissertation Mikołaj Sep-Szarzyński a początki polskiego baroku [Mikołaj Sep-Szarzyński and the Beginnings of the Polish Baroque], which at first was to be his doctoral thesis. With time Błoński made research outside of his specialization his habit. Being an excellent expert in the French language and literature he began assimilating to Polish culture the outstanding figures, mainly from the circle of avant-garde drama: he translated the works by Ionesco, Genet, Artaud, and together with Marek Kędzierski he wrote a short monograph of Beckett, but he was also the author of the first Polish book about Proust Widzieć jasno w zachwyceniu [To See Clearly in Admiration]. The contemporary lovers of the works of the classics of the French criticism of the 20th century should also know that we owe Błoński the first Polish editions of the selected writings by Bachelard, Poulet or Barthes.

The characteristics of Błoński included a wide approach, the ability to notice various contexts of literature (who, for example, knows that he was interested in economy and he could intertwine economy and prose). He was a legendary lecturer and apart from his regular students there were other students who greedily absorbed his pioneering interpretations of texts, always marked with his personal traits, and his historical panoramic interpretations of Polish literature, for instance his famous panorama of the 20th century Polish poetry with two poles of Przyboś and Miłosz, the creation of which on the academic blackboard I could see myself. Besides, those lectures of his were a theatre of gestures, famous giggling; in a word, of the language that expressed strong emotions, since on the one hand, as an expert on Gombrowicz and being the literary director of Stary Theatre in Kraków during its best years Błoński could sense the theatricalness of human existence, and on the other hand, literature was of the highest importance to him.

That’s why, although the perfection of form was important to him he did not read literary works only in an aesthetizing way but he examined the form to find the expressions of inner problems of the author as a representative of the society or more widely of the humankind. Since literature was for Błoński a matter of taste and also, like for Herbert, a matter of morality, which was seriously practiced every day as well. Perhaps that was the reason why the author of ‘Zmiana warty’, although he was not an active dissident during the communist times, the hierarchy of the communist party regarded him as an especially inconvenient and dangerous opponent, who was gifted with a strong ethical character, knowledge of the world of values and charisma that drew young people and at the same time completely resistant to affections and threats of the authorities.

The sense of morality led Błoński to the areas in which Polish people had yielded to special form of hypocrisy so far. Hiding behind the heroism of those who had rescued the Jews during the occupation they turned a blind eye to the excesses of anti-Semitism and at least justified their indifference towards the crimes they witnessed. In order to understand Błoński’s way of thinking one must tell a story he gave. Being a 12 year old boy he was walking along some street in Warsaw when the Jewish ghetto was liquidated. Suddenly, a Jewish boy appeared – he must have escaped from the ghetto. It flashed through little Jan’s mind that he should help the boy. But what could a 12 year old boy do?

He felt absolved and relieved. And the future critic was ashamed of these feelings. After years he wrote an essay that probably won him the biggest fame worldwide. Apparently, it was only an interpretation of Miłosz’s poem Biedny chrześciejanie patrzy na getto [A poor Christian looks at the ghetto]. In fact, Błoński analysed what could be called ‘the fault of the innocent’ or ‘the fault of the eye witnesses of crimes’. The article entitled Biedni Polacy patrzą na getto [Poor Poles look at the getto], published in ‘Tygodnik Powszechny’ faced an avalanche of protests and the author received words of support from very few people and exceptionally many insults from various ‘true Poles.’ But actually it was an introduction to a full mutual, completely different than earlier, understanding of the Polish-Jewish dialogue. This article and the subsequent book having the same title, in which Błoński expanded the Polish-Jewish issues, have also shaped the reality we are living in now.

Allegedly immersed only in literature, Błoński was also a man of the public forum: a critic whom the media eagerly approached, the co-founder and the first editor of ‘Teksty’, the editor of the series ‘Biblioteka Polska’, the literary director of the Stary Theatre, a vice-rector of the Jagiellonian University when the marshal was introduced, the director of the Institute of Polish Studies, an ambassador of Polish culture in the French speaking countries, a great figure in the literary scene, the one who influenced the whole reality of the Polish culture of the second half of the 20th century.

Shaping the reality that surrounds us Błoński formed the characters of those who were lucky to meet him. The importance of such contacts can be confirmed by the critical correspondence between him and Słomamir Mrożek, his long-standing friend and intellectual partner in discussions, which was published a few years ago. Błoński had many such partners: Miłosz, Wyka, Swinarski, Flaszen, Jeleński, Lem, Markiewicz, Woźniakowski, Turowicz, Kwiatkowski, Puzyna, Kijowski, Jarocki,

NEWS letter No. 37 Winter 2009 15
Jan Błoński was born in Warsaw in 1931. He finished his Polish studies at the Jagiellonian University in 1952. He worked in the Institute of Literary Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences in 1959-62. From 1970 he worked at the Jagiellonian University. He was the vice-rector for didactic affairs (1981-84), director of the Institute of Polish Philology (1988-91), director of the Department of the Theatre (1977-1980) and the Department of the 20th Century Polish Literature (1995-1997). During his academic career he also lectured Polish literature at the University of Sorbonne, the University of Clermont-Ferrand and the University Paris IV. He died on 10 February 2009.

M. Miżejewski lecturing at the University of Ivano-Frankivsk

Wajda, Geremek – to mention only a few. But contacts with Błoński brought unique profits. It was an experience of contact with a strong, clearly formed personality, having an excellent sense of humour, which he worked out following the masters of the absurd, a personality who used to think in a fundamentally serious way. Since life, like literature, was for Błoński a truly serious matter and one should live one’s life in a worthy way – independently from all adversities and political situations.

I belonged to the first disciples of Janek Błoński at the Jagiellonian University and I will never stop being his debtor. Being under his supervision did not only mean drawing from the vast resources of his knowledge and brilliant intelligence but also practical learning of the art of style – life, writing since Janek was a master of style widely understood. He introduced his disciple immediately into his world, opened possibilities to meet people who surrounded him. He feathered the way to publish his disciple’s texts in the most important magazines; he read his works in a critical and inspiring way but he also supported him in difficult moments. Certainly, he was not an ‘easy’ man like any really outstanding personality but you always had the feeling that you were talking to someone that was important to the world and people – someone wise and at the same time someone good. That’s why it is more difficult to bid farewell to him and the world without him seems to be poorer.

Jerzy Jarzębski

[the article was first published in Polish in ‘Gazeta Wyborcza’ 38/2009]

Lectures at Ukrainian universities

The contemporary Polish political scene from the perspective of our Ukrainian neighbours, the political culture as well as the style of the public debate in the media were the main topics of my lectures delivered at the Universities in Ivano-Frankivsk and Kamyanets Podilsk, Ukraine, in October 2008.

Freedom of mass media vs. responsibility for words

The lecture for the students of political science at the Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University in Ivano-Frankivsk concerned the guarantee of freedom of speech and viewpoints written in Poland’s constitution as confronted with the practice of journalists’ jobs in Poland. One of the theses I posed in the discussion was the issue of the limitation of freedom of speech in public debate. My stand is that freedom of speech is not an absolute value and must have limits out of concern for the protection of citizens’ personal rights. Using the right of freedom of speech must be accompanied by the sense of responsibility for words.

However, during the discussions some people said that freedom of speech should be treated as a value that could in no way be limited, especially in a democratic country, which should not interfere with the rights of citizens who want to express their critical evaluations concerning the state politics. Concluding my lecture, I claimed that the misuse of freedom of speech, especially in the practice of journalism, often led to illegal activities, which resulted in slander or defamation. The Polish penal law (articles 212 and 216), introducing sanctions for such deeds (fine or imprisonment up to 2 years if the perpetrator committed the deed through the mass media) protects the interests of those, who for example, having been slandered by the press have lost their social confidence, necessary to perform public functions.

I stressed that one could claim one’s personal rights in the civil lawsuits (article 24 of the Civil Code), demanding financial compensation. During the election campaign any candidate may apply to the court for the rectification of the information (article 91 of the Act on Elections to the Sejm of Republic of Poland and to the Senate of the Republic of Poland) and thanks to that the wronged person has the right to apply to the District Court and demand that the media rectify the wrong or inaccurate information, to stop spreading the false information and demand an apology. The court should examine the petition within 24 hours.

Perspectives of collaboration

My short stay in Ukraine resulted from the exchange between the Jagiellonian
University and the Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University in Ivano-Frankivsk. It was organised by Mr Igor Gurak, the head of the International Relations Office. I also talked to Prof. Wawrzyniec Marczuk, the director of the Institute of Political Sciences, about the scientific collaboration between Polish and Ukrainian universities, participation in planned conferences and symposia and the possibility to publish articles in academic periodicals. Prof. Marczuk expressed a desire to initiate International Collaboration Prof. Wiktor Zawalniuk, together with the Vice-Rector for culture and literature. Prof. Zawalniuk, to know how the Polish language, history, culture and tradition of Polish studies where students get familiarized. The University has a course of Polish studies and the University in Kamyanets Podilski at the invitation of its Rector Prof. Oleksandr Marusenko was at the Ivan Ohijenko National University in Kamyanets Podilski and the castle.

Lectures in Polish delivered in Kamyanets Podilski

The second part of my visit to Ukraine was at the Ivan Ohijenko National University in Kamyanets Podilski at the invitation of its Rector Prof. Oleksandr Zawalniuk. The University has a course of Polish studies where students get to know the Polish language, history, culture and literature. Prof. Zawalniuk, together with the Vice-Rector for International Collaboration Prof. Wiktor Sawczuk expressed a desire to initiate collaboration with the Jagiellonian University.

The first step towards this collaboration was my lecture delivered in Polish for students belonging to the group of Antonina Czajka, a doctoral student of the Catholic University of Lublin, who is preparing her doctoral dissertation on the Polish local dialect in the region of Podilia. My lecture focused on the language of the Polish media and its function in the political and social debate. My students in Kamyanets Podilski: the University and the castle.

used information in a reliable, objective and impartial way, being responsible for their words, they undoubtedly fulfill one of the main tasks of the mass media, which is the function to control those in authority. Unfortunately, it happens that the editorial policy, the so-called ‘programme line’ of a given newspaper, favours one political option, which results in losing credibility of a given medium. The rank of the media in the social opinion increases when they stop being the tube of the government and become ‘liaisons’ in the process of communication between the society and the authorities, guaranteeing citizens the right to criticism concerning the state politics. The media that do not take social opinion into consideration will never constitute a forum of public debate.

The students in Kamyanets Podilski expressed their hope that the example of Poland that had consistently supported journalist standards, having been obligatory in democratic countries for a long time, for the last 20 years of its free media would help the young Ukrainian democracy, which experienced another stage of political transformation, break with the model of the media and journalism being at the disposal of the authorities or financial groups of interests. The Ukrainian students treated the idea of building a democratic society as a challenge they needed to undertake.

Dr. Maciej Młotewski
Leiden University organised the third conference on university rankings on 6-7 February 2009. It gathered numerous representatives from all over the world and institutions that deal with distributing financial means for research in various countries. The subject of university rankings arouses great interest in public opinion, especially since there has been a development in the role of such rankings in the last several years. This process is a natural consequence of globalisation leading to increasing competition among institutions of higher education. It was emphasised that generally speaking global rankings evaluated only ca. 1,000 higher education institutions. The interesting fact is that as a rule the rankings do not include African, Latin American and Arab institutions of higher education.

The results of the rankings cannot be ignored since they exert influence on the clients of universities (candidates, various stakeholders). Some countries try to introduce within a certain period a planned number of their universities to the first 10, 20, 50 or 100 best universities in the world. As a result 63% of universities undertake strategic and organisational activities, reacting to the ranking results and only 8% have not done anything. Universities try to focus on the ranking indicators that could most easily be changed. Most of them aim at improving their results by increasing the number of publications in English quoted in the most prestigious periodicals, opening more programmes in English, encouraging their employees to quote their colleagues’ works and giving proper affiliations of the authors in every publication. At the same time universities attempt to strengthen the potential of university units, especially those that are weak. Furthermore, biological-medical sciences get support since the publication concerning biology and medicine are most widely represented in the international quotation data bases. Universities also try to build new laboratories, employing those researchers who are most quoted and to improve students’ services as well as recruiting more students to postgraduate programmes, especially doctoral studies. Consequently, the number of publications at all universities has increased.

However, according to experts you cannot expect to introduce new universities to the list of the first 25 world universities and the changes of places in the top 100 universities are limited. Recently, there have been three cases of a considerable change of the ranking places in the top 100 universities. This success was the result of university mergers. The connection between the place in the ranking and the budget is evident. It is worth adding that while looking for the best possible characteristics of some university the evaluating factors include its activities for the cause of its local community besides educational, research and innovative activities as well as internationalisation and size. The involvement in the local community concerns cultural events (concerts and exhibitions) and alumni’s involvement in the region (their number, participation in EU structural funds, special trainings and contribution to the revenues of the region. Recent rankings also evaluate particular fields of science and the scores are shown in particular categories.

Besides rankings made by the media there have appeared rankings prepared by scientific institutions. The bibliometric ranking was created at Leiden University. Another ranking embracing several European countries was created by the Centre for Higher Education. Of course, we have the Shanghai rankings. Therefore, one can speak of professionalisation of rankings. At the same time most countries create their own national rankings and some countries, e.g. Norway, are working on such a project. The contest to prepare a methodology of European ranking, announced in December by the EU, will have reached its deadline soon. With great probability the ranking is expected to be based on the experiences gained by those that created HRK ranking and Leiden University ranking. Initially, it was the media that created rankings. Now it is scientists connected with independent institutions or universities that prepare them. They are seeking the best methods to measure the differences between various universities. It is especially important to create a mechanism to evaluate the achievements in humanities and engineering. The language of scientific publication is a serious problem. Publications in other languages than English have minimal significance for the circulation of scientific information. Consequently, they have little meaning for the evaluation of university scientific activities.

Leszek Śliwa
International Day at Volda University College

International Day is an annual event to present the possibilities of studying abroad and to meet the diverse cultures represented by the international community of Volda University College, Norway. On 11 February 2009 over 150 international students and guests from all around the world represented their home Universities. As Volda students are very mobile (in most study programmes it is mandatory to spend a semester abroad to get international experience) the event was welcomed with outstanding interest. All day long students had the opportunity to gain information about Volda partner Universities, watch films or photos showing foreign countries, or ask questions about study abroad programmes and life abroad. As spending a semester abroad means also meeting with local culture, sometimes even exotic, therefore to enable students to taste the culture with their own senses all the stands offered a small snack made according to national recipes. There was also a presentation of African dances performed by Kenyan students, a special “vampire” performance presented by Ukraino-Romanian-Moldovian team, a concert by the Volda Student Choir, and music performed by students to add splendour to the event. There was also a possibility to win 7,000 NOK in the form of an exchange scholarship for taking part in a quiz on Volda international contacts.

To celebrate the international guests Rector of Volda University College, Jorgen Amdam, invited everyone to a special dinner. As a follow-up of the International Day Jacob Holdt, Danish globetrotter, showed pictures taken during his 5-year long trip around the USA, focusing on racism and social inequalities. To emphasise different aspects of culture Dr. Nezih Orhon showed three short documentary films turned by his students in Eskisehir, Turkey.

Finally, the International Office Team proved their great hospitality and friendliness of the Norwegian nation by organising for their international guests a trip around the picturesque fiords in their winter coat and spending long hours on vivid discussions about internationalisation of studies within university partnerships. After all, the Volda University College vision reads as follows: “our home is Volda, but our perspective is international”.

Katarzyna Byrska

IRUN meeting in Glasgow

The first IRUN communications forum was held at the University of Glasgow on 6 March 2009. It gathered the representatives of five universities belonging to the IRUN network: University of Glasgow, Radboud University Nijmegen, Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest, Westfälische Wilhems-Universität Münster and the Jagiellonian University. The host of the meeting was Mrs Susan Stewart, Director of Corporate Communications at the University of Glasgow. Each participant made a short presentation of his/her university. Dr. P. (Pim) van Zanen, the Head of the in-and external communications of the Radboud University Nijmegen and Mrs Stewart outlined the IRUN communication strategy. The importance of internal and external information about IRUN was stressed. The IRUN website banner has already been developed. During the meeting it was proposed to prepare a leaflet and an e-newsletter about IRUN.

The discussion on IRUN corporate communications will be continued during the IRUN Rector’s meeting in Budapest on 20-21 March 2009.

The University of Glasgow was founded in 1451 and is the second oldest university in Scotland and the fourth oldest in the English-speaking world. Its famous alumni embrace scientist Lord Kelvin, economist Adam Smith and pioneer of television John Logie Baird. The main campus is centred around a neo-Gothic building with an impressive spire erected in the 19th century and is a landmark that can be seen from across the city. It has 8 faculties and over 20,000 students from 120 countries. There is one Erasmus agreement between the University of Glasgow and the Jagiellonian University in the field of European studies.

M. Kantor
Between 16 and 26 February I made a detour southwards of Poland. My first stop was Budapest, where I could spend a week thanks to the existing agreement on the bilateral exchange between the Jagellonian University and Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem (the Budapest University). My first steps led to the seat of Művészetttörténeti Tanszék (Department of Art History), already well known to me, where I met prof. Maria Prokopp to talk about the new Erasmus agreement and problems common to the Central European art historians nowadays. It appeared also to be a good opportunity to renew the once existing contacts with the Institute’s library and... old friendships. My scholarly interests made it necessary to contact Prof. Béla Zsolt Szakács, the Head of the Department of Art History at the Péter Pázmány Catholic University, one of the founders of the Medieval Studies at the Central European University and eminent specialist in Romanesque Hungarian art. His advices facilitated my researches at the Library of the Fine Arts Museum to be successfully fulfilled, which will soon result in an article on the Hungarian aspects of the architecture and sculpture of the Romanesque Abbey in Tyniec.

The next part of my journey was Serbia, where I have been accompanied by Dr. Piotr Grotowski, historian of Byzantine Art from the Pontifical Academy of Theology in Kraków. Once there we were helped by Dr. Velimir Matanović, art historian from the Faculty of Architecture of the University of Belgrade. Thanks to that we were able to visit some of the most outstanding monuments of Serbian medieval art, like the monasteries of Žiča, Studenica Gradac, Sopočani and Arilje. The more challenging part was a visit to the monasteries of Gračanica and Visoki Dečani and the patriarchate church in Peč as these monuments are in the Kosovo and Metohija region now, protected by the Swedish and Italian KFOR units from destruction, which was the common faith of the Orthodox churches of the region recently. Our last step was Belgrade as I was to deliver a lecture on the Central European Romanesque to the students of Prof. Mirjana Roter-Blagojević at the Belgrade University. Our visit to the Institute for the Protection of Cultural Monuments of Serbia (Prof. Vera Pavlović Lončarski and Prof. Gordana Mitrović) was short, but appeared to be very fruitful. My Institute received a considerable number of their recent publications and a number of ideas on future collaboration emerged. We came back northwards with the car trunk filled with books, full of memory cards in our photo cameras and hopes to come back “there” again.

Detour to Budapest and Serbia

R. Quirini-Popławski
The Ruhr-University Bochum, Germany, organised its well-known international fair and information day ‘Grenzenlos – Studying and Working Abroad’ on 20 November 2008. The Ruhr-University invited its partner universities: Belarusian State University, Minsk, Université François Rabelais de Tours, Universiteit Utrecht, Universidad de Oviedo, the University of Wrocław and the Jagiellonian University. The representatives of these universities met at the welcome dinner on the day before the fair.

The Jagiellonian University was represented by Mrs Agata Kozielska, the Head of the Educational Affairs Office and Dr Maria Kantor, from the International Relations Office. Early in the morning of 20 November M. Kozielska and I prepared our JU booth in the foyer of the Audimax at the Ruhr campus. We brought JU leaflets, information about our courses in English for Erasmus students and guides to Kraków. During the fair we showed a short movie in English about our University. But of course, most importantly we informed potential students who were considering the option of pursuing a degree with us or coming for one semester or two as exchange students about our university.

At the Grenzenlos Fair there were ca. 50 exhibitors, including the Federal Foreign Office Germany, the German Academic Exchange Service, the British Council, the Fulbright Commission, the Embassy of France/CIDU and various student networks. Moreover, there were seminars, discussions and presentations.

The Grenzenlos Fair is a major event at the Ruhr University, taking place every two years and is visited by several thousands of students and staff members. The aim is to bundle information on study opportunities, jobs, practical trainings, grants and applications in foreign countries. Thus the Ruhr-University Bochum supports students’ mobility by increasing the flow of information by providing international exchange programmes.

Currently, there are three Erasmus agreements between the Ruhr-University and the Jagiellonian University in the fields of law, history and history of art.

A delegation of Radboud University Nijmegen, Holland, made a study trip to the Jagiellonian University on 1-3 December 2008. The delegation was led by Prof. Sebastian Kortmann, Rector Magnificus, and consisted of Dr. M. Janssen, Head International Office, Prof. C. Jansen, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Prof. H. Geuvers, Professor of Intelligent Systems from the Faculty of Science, Dr. H. Nijssen, Faculty of Science, Prof. F. Corstens, Dean and Vice Chairman Executive Committee Radboud University Medical Centre, Prof. T. Coenen, Emeritus Professor of Psychology and initiator of the Kraków cooperation, Dr. R. Kayser, Head Department Education, Research and Social Services, Dr. C. Hagemann, Department of Communication Science, Prof. J. van de Gronden, Professor of International and European Law, and Mrs. N. Padberg-Boender, MA, Coordinator of the Erasmus and Lifelong Learning Programme of the Faculty of Law.

The programme of this short visit was very intense. Different members of the delegation had meetings with their respective JU colleagues on 1 December. At noon they all gathered at the plenary session in Collegium Novum to talk to JU Rector Prof. K. Musioł, Vice-rectors Prof. Mania, Prof. Biliński and Prof. Nowak (Collegium Medicum) as well as Prof. P. Laidler and Prof. T. Grodzicki from the JU Faculty of Medicine. They discussed the topic of internationalisation, university autonomy and student mobility. Prof. Kortmann mentioned the ambassadors program that Radboud University developed for its IRUN students.

Dr. M. Janssen paid a short visit to JU International Office and talked to Mr M. Klimkiewicz, JU Erasmus institutional officer, about the structure of international relations and student mobility at both universities.

Finally, there was a wrap-up meeting in the afternoon. The members of the Radboud delegation reported in brief about their separate meetings. Prof. Kortmann emphasized once more the importance of joint degrees, possibly within the framework of Erasmus Mundus. There was also a discussion about the possibility of traineeships and joint Master programmes.

It is worth stressing that both universities belong to the International Research Universities Network (IRUN) and have developed various forms of collaboration for the last several years. Hopefully, the study trip will contribute to that.

M. Kantor
In Poland during very important discussions people use symbols, myths, conceptions or historical images instead of theses. We use historical myths and recollections, said Professor Bronisław Łagowski at the meeting held in the JU Auditorium Maximum on 6th November 2008. The meeting was organised by the Circle of Political Sciences, students' scientific organisation.

Professor Bronisław Łagowski, a well-known Polish philosopher, historian of ideas and journalist, was employed at Jagiellonian University for many years. Currently, he works at the Pedagogical University of Kraków. During the communist period he wrote articles for ‘Tygodnik Powszechny’, one of the most important opposition weeklies. He has recently published a book entitled ‘Pochwała politycznej bierności’ [Praise of Political Passiveness]. Like all his earlier publications, including ‘List otwarty do trzydziestolatków’ [Open Letter to the 30 Year-Old People], ‘Liberálna kontrewolúcia’ [Liberal Contra-revolution], ‘Szkice antyspołeczne’ [Anti-social Sketches], ‘Lagodny protest obywatelski’ [Mild Citizens’ Protest], the book reflects his main personal interests, i.e. the philosophy of politics. The publication of the book was the direct reason for organising the meeting with JU students of political sciences. They were to discuss the quality of Polish political discourse as well as the ideas of Realism, Romanticism and Conservatism.

Prof. Łagowski said that the first problem of using symbols and historical myths in the philosophical discourse could be changed although it received much criticism. He emphasised that one could not postulate the change of the discourse because it had to result from some real grounds. Every discourse requires appropriate conditions. ‘A new discourse can be created if we can see some habit or some truism that reality should be described as it is and one must draw more general conclusions’. Only such an attitude towards the reality and to real activities will create the background for abstract language.'

Then the discussion focused on the issue of Realism and Romanticism in Poland. The participants of the meeting were already stimulated by the previously discussed topics and asked Prof. Łagowski to set the border between Romanticism and Realism as well as to comment on whether he regarded Romanticism as an exceptionally ‘Polish’ intellectual disease. They also wanted to know the possible reasons for that. Prof. Lagowski, who characterises himself as a political realist, presented his conception. According to him Poles show realistic attitudes after their ‘national disasters’ and they lose it after victories, which evokes more and more Romantic attitudes. The discussion led to the analysis of the effectiveness of realists and romantics. Summing up this issue Prof. Łagowski said that ‘Romanticism is sometimes in Polish people and sometimes there is no trace of it at all.’

Finally, the participants of the meeting talked about conservatism, which as Prof. Lagowski said, ‘does not seem to be a right idea because its stylised form was borrowed. And conservatists are those that deny the basic principle of accumulation (accumulation of material goods, etc.).’

It is worth mentioning that Prof. Lagowski stressed that conservatists were many a time convinced that they got to know ‘the absolute principles’, which was misleading. He thought that one could accept such a conviction because ‘conservatism follows facts’.

Let me quote the last thought of the interesting meeting, ‘obeying principles even if they are the principles of realistic politics is not realistic.’

Students of political sciences are looking forward to continuing this interesting debate.

Maksymilian Galon

The JU Circle of Political Sciences it is a student organisation founded in the academic year 1999/2000, gathering students of political sciences and also of other disciplines who are interested in political and social problems. The organisation is divided into thematic sections (Historical, Independent Political Reflection, Local Government, Security, Political Journalist, Social-Economic, Energy Security, Analytical, Religion and Politics). The members of the circle regularly meet and organise various conferences. For example, last year they organised conferences entitled ‘Student of political sciences, who are you?’, ‘Politea’, or ‘Politikon’. They also publish magazines ‘Drugi Obieg’ and ‘Zeszyty Naukowe’ (with reviews of articles). More information about the organisation is at www.knpuj.pl
Ski contest

Under the patronage of the Vice-rector for Collegium Medicum the alpine skiing and snowboard cup was held in Korbielów at the beginning of April 2009. There were 140 contestants. Every year the skiing competitions attract more students and academics, being at the same time integrating events. There are several categories of competitions, including children’s contest. This time the most sports family were the Lusters. Their three children won all contests organised for the children of the JU employees and the parents were in the eight top skiers.

On this occasion it is worth mentioning that the Academic Sports Association of the Jagiellonian University celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. During the Polish Academic Winter Sports Cup in Zakopane the JU students won 16 medals.

The Association offers training concentrating on the usual team sports, horseback riding, swimming, tennis, biking or judo and winter sports as Kraków is only a short bus ride away from skiing and snowboarding adventures.

M. Kantor

The Concert of the Boulevard Harmonists

On 9 December 2008, the Jagiellonian University hosted the Boulevard Harmonists from South Africa. The 6-voice (mixed) a capella ensemble gave a concert in the Aula of Collegium Novum. The concert was organised by the JU International Students Office and the Society for African Affairs.

The Boulevard Harmonists performed various musical works (classical works, folk music, South African music), including Cantate Dominum by Giuseppe O. Pitoni, Ave Maria by Sergei Rachmaninov, Halleluja by Rudolf de Beer, Hodie Christus natus est by Jan P. Sweelinck or Verano Porteño by Astor Piazzolla.

The Boulevard Harmonists A Capella Ensemble was founded in the year 1994 and is part of the Potchefstroom Campus of the North West University, South Africa. At first, they were to perform at the Standard Bank National Arts Festival in Grahamstown. But their concert was so successful that they decided to form a permanent group. Since then they have regularly performed in major festivals in South Africa. In 2004 the Boulevard Harmonists won the Prague International Competition for Smaller Ensembles. The group has undertaken three concert tours to Europe (1999, 2002 and 2004). They have also released four CD’s.

The concert at the Jagiellonian University was part of their fourth tour to Europe on 30 November – 23 December 2008, during which they also performed in Belgrade and Novi Sad, Serbia, Budapest and Szentendre, Hungary, Prague and Český Krumlov, the Czech Republic, Salzburg and Vienna, Austria and Istanbul, Turkey.

M. Kantor
The academic expedition of the Jagiellonian University, comprising 16 master’s and doctoral students (from the Institute of Sociology, Political Sciences, the Institute of Geology, the Institute of Journalism, the Department of Mediterranean Civilisation) as well as two professors, was organised by the Society for African Affairs at the Jagiellonian University (AKoN UJ) within the framework of the society’s programme of developmental education in the European educational curriculum. The Honorary patronage of the expedition was undertaken by the Rector of the Jagiellonian University Prof. Dr. Karol Musioł. The head of the delegation was the Dean of the JU Faculty of Philosophy Prof. Dr. Maria Flis. The visit to South Africa lasted two weeks, from 24 November to 7 December 2008. All the members of the delegation looked forward to the journey especially that they had to wait almost nine months, which seemed like an eternity. Most members had never been to Africa and visiting this continent seemed to be only a dream. When we finally boarded onto the Swiss aircraft in the evening of 23 November 2008 we were once again reminded that dreams can come true. Seneca said, ‘travel and change of place impart new vigour to the mind’. That time-tested observation returned to us while landing at the Johannesburg International Airport in the morning of 24 November. We finally reached South Africa and we could not believe it! Indeed, we reached the cradle of mankind. The air in Johannesburg was light. It was a sunny and hot day. There was a new kind of smell around. In fact, one way to recognise a familiar place is to smell it. The smell of Johannesburg caught us unconsciously, as if by surprise. It was new, alien and different.

The main objective of the expedition, which was to be a bridge-building experience, was to initiate academic co-operation between the Jagiellonian University and four South African main universities. Hopefully, commencing from the academic year 2009/2010 the JU will host lectures from the University of Pretoria, the University of Johannesburg and Rhodes University for short-stays or semester programmes during which they will teach various African subjects. It is also possible that if this new students’ interest in African studies continues, the JU will establish a separate university unity dealing with African studies.

It is also worth noticing that within the framework of the 3rd African Festival in Krakow, on Wednesday 13 May 2009, the post-expedition conference entitled ‘15 years after the Apartheid: The Educational and Political State of Affairs in South Africa’ will be organised at the Jagiellonian University.

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