Contents

University news
2 Professor Tadeusz Ulewicz turned 90
3 L’Oreal Poland Award for Agnieszka Jaźwa
3 Seeking the soul of medicine - new book of Professor Andrzej Szczeklik
4 Road safety is no accident
5 Disability Support Office
5 The 100th issue of Alma Mater

Features
6 Away poetry, thou art a tyrant! – Year of Stanisław Wyspiański
8 Master of Arts in TransAtlantic Studies
10 Chinese calligraphy by Fu Heifen
11 100th birth anniversary of Prof. Aleksandrowicz
12 The Centre for Holocaust Studies at JU
13 Tourism in the Ukrainian Eastern Carpathians
16 Four Seasons with Polish Language
17 The Council of Scientific Circles
18 Exhibition of Beethoven’s manuscripts

International relations
19 Visit to Leiden University
19 New agreements
20 Visit to the Technical University of Istanbul

Student life
22 Scholarship in Jerusalem – Erasmus Mundus
22 Concert of Christmas carols
23 Study abroad is just the beginning
25 The Year of the Brown Rat – Festival of Chinese Culture
On 29 October 2007 the former students and friends of Professor Tadeusz Ulewicz celebrated his 90th birthday in the aula of Collegium Maius. Prof. Andrzej Borowski, Chair of the History of Old Polish Literature, said that all the gathered called themselves disciples of Professor Ulewicz. Dr. Jakub Niedzwiedz offered Prof. Ulewicz a commemorative book written by specialists in Polish studies and in turn the UJ Rector Prof. Karol Musioł awarded him a special university medal. During the birthday celebration Prof. Ulewicz said that he owed everything to St Jacek’s gymnasium he had attended, to the eight years he spent there studying Latin and Greek. Professor Tadeusz Ulewicz is a living legend of the Jagiellonian University. He studied Polish literature in the years 1935-39. During the Nazi occupation he participated in the underground teaching organised by UJ scientists. It was during that time that he met student Karol Wojtyła, the future Pope John Paul II. After the war Prof. Ulewicz worked as an assistant and from 1967 a professor in the Department of Old Polish Literature and Polish Enlightenment Literature. His research concerned Polish Medieval and Renaissance literature and culture. He is an expert on the literary output of the Polish Renaissance poet Jan Kochanowski, called the father of Polish poetry. He was the editor of Ruch Literacki [Literary Movement] and Archiwum Literackie [Literary Archive]. Prof. Ulewicz was awarded the honorary doctor’s degree from the University of Milano, Italy, and the University of Łódź. His book Iter romano-italicum polonorum, czyli o związkach umysłowo-kulturalnych Polski z Włochami [Iter romano-italicum polonorum, about the intellectual-cultural relationships between Poland and Italy] was awarded the book of the month in May 2000.

M. Kantor,

Based on Alma Mater, No. 98, December 2007
L’Oréal Fellowship for Agnieszka Jaźwa

Mrs Agnieszka Jaźwa (born 1978), doctoral student in the Department of Medical Biotechnology, the Faculty of Biochemistry, Biophysics and Biotechnology, Jagiellonian University, received the L’Oréal Poland For Women in Science Fellowship for her doctoral dissertation entitled ‘Bicistronic plasmid and AAV vectors delivering VEGF and FGF-4 genes for the stimulation of neovascularization processes.’

The main purpose of the L’Oréal -UNESCO Awards For Women in Science is to benefit the situation of female researchers and to facilitate equal advancement for women and men in the scientific world. This program abolishes the traditional role and demonstrates through real life examples that women can also be very good scientists. Actually, scientific research is one of the most challenging fields for young women. Besides imagination and curiosity it requires diligence and patience, and women scientists perform very well in this domain.

The seventh annual L’Oréal Poland For Women in Science Fellowships were awarded in a ceremony held in Warsaw on 7 December 2007. Three fellowships with a value of 5,200 euros each were awarded to women scientists pursuing doctoral studies and two fellowships with a value of 6,500 euros each to women pursuing post-doctoral studies. Mrs Agnieszka Jaźwa is writing her doctoral dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Józef Dulak. Her research concerns therapeutic neovascularization (stimulation of new blood vessels formation), which is tested for the treatment of peripheral and myocardial ischemia. The aim of her study is to investigate the angiogenic synergism between vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) and fibroblast growth factor-4 (FGF-4) delivered either in plasmid or adeno-associated viral vectors (AAV). VEGF is the main angiogenic agent and one of the well-studied factors for therapeutic angiogenesis for cardiac and limb repair. FGF-4 was shown to play a pivotal role in the maturation of newly formed capillaries and their enlargement and stabilization in a process called arteriogenesis. The preliminary data indicates that simultaneous overexpression of both angiogenic proteins (VEGF and FGF-4) delivered in bicistronic AAV vectors lead to more mature blood vessels formation, improved post-ischemic foot blood flow and decreased incidence of toe necrosis in a murine model of hind limb ischemia. Therefore, this strategy might be a promising option for therapeutic neovascularization in clinical perspective.

Seeking the soul of medicine - new book of PROFESSOR SZCZEKLIK

Kore. O chorych, chorobach i poszukiwaniu duszy medycyny [Kore. About the Sick, Diseases and Seeking the Soul of Medicine] is the title of the new book written by Andrzej Szczeklik, professor of medicine, the head of II Internal Diseases Department, the Medical College of the Jagiellonian University. He explains the title, ‘In Greek ‘kore’ means a girl and a pupil. The Greek used to say that one could see the soul, as a figure of a little girl, through the pupil of the eye. How did they know that the pupil is the only little window into the brain and its eye nerves? And where is the soul now? What does medicine say about the soul? Does it look for some soul in itself? Medicine seeks the soul in its eternal worlds, somewhere between life and death, health and disease, science and art and in love as well. Let us together seek the soul. Let medicine lead us. We are going soul-hunting. The soul of medicine.’

On 7 November 2007, the meeting with Prof. Szczeklik and his readers was held in Auditorium Maximum. Talks about the book and the soul of medicine were carried out by Prof. Andrzej Bochenek, a heart surgeon, the film director Andrzej Wajda, the poet Ewa Lipska and the philosopher Władysław Stróżewski. The meeting had a unique character, being a mixture of medicine, philosophy and literature. At the close the outstanding poet and Nobel winner Wisława Szymborska read her poem entitled Trochę o duszy. The poem seems to tell us that as we need the soul the soul needs us, too.

M. Kantor
The Institute of Public Health, Jagiellonian University Medical College, organised the seminar ‘Building the Bridge Between Global and Local Initiatives’ on 22 November 2008. The seminar was organised within the framework of the Europubhealth Programme. The first session was devoted to road safety locally and globally, which was presented by the international students of the Europubhealth Programme at the JU. Pavel Ptyushkin, MD, talked about the WHO policy on road safety as well as road safety and road crashes prevention programmes in the Russian Federation. Sadiq Bhanbhro talked about traffic accidents in Pakistan. Hong Chen presented the subject of the road traffic safety plan in China. Polish students Joanna Chacia and Joanna Gniewosz introduced the topic of prevention of head injury among children caused by traffic accidents in Poland.

The second session was filled with talks presented by the invited guests from the Ministry of Transport, the World Bank (which established the World Bank Global Road Safety Facility in 2006 and Transport sector strategy ‘Safe, Clean and Affordable Transport in 2007’), the Voivodeship Headquarters of Police in Kraków, the Ministry of Health, University Children’s Hospital, the Traffic Engineering Department in Kraków and the ‘Safe Driver’ foundation. They presented the goals and priorities of the National Road Safety Improvement Programs, the assessment of child traffic injury prevention, police activities for road safety improvement, the medical emergency system in Poland and the road infrastructure in the Region of Małopolska. Poland is one of the biggest EU countries with more than 11 million drivers and 16 million cars. The number of registered vehicles, increased by 88% between 1990 and 2004.

The closing part of the seminar was group work and discussion, which focused on needs, expectations and challenges in road safety and the campaign ‘I think soberly, I drive soberly’.

The overall picture of road safety is sad and the scale of the problem is huge. The number of road accidents, of dead and wounded are alarming. Globally, 1.2 billion people die each year from traffic injuries; up to 50 million people are injured or disabled; road accidents will be the fourth largest cause of healthy life years lost by 2030; around 85% of road accidents occur in low and middle income countries (WHO, 2004). The recent appalling statistics in the two big countries show ca. 200,000 accidents (10.1 deaths per 100 victims) in Russia and 420,000 accidents (90,000 death tolls) and 3 million euro economic loss in China. 84.2% of all accidents in Russia are caused by drivers who violate traffic rules whereas 70% of all road accidents in China are caused by overloading. In Poland 5,500 people are killed annually and 22% of accidents are caused by speeding, which is the number one cause of accidents on Polish roads. Speed coupled with obsolete infrastructure and badly maintained roads can be a deadly combination, which exposes all road users to unnecessary risk. The safety enhancement projects include improvement of road infrastructure, launching safety inspections, modernising emergency management, implementation of weather disaster forecast, changing the road user’s behaviour, use of helmets for drivers; laws and regulations revision or modern forms of educating about road communication. An example of such a form is the Polish campaign ‘I think soberly, I drive soberly’ that aims at reaching teenagers and making them aware of the dangers of driving after consuming alcohol.

M. Kantor

www.europubhealth.org

Road safety is no accident

Traffic jam predicted in 1828
On 17 January 2008, a new Disability Support Office was opened at the Jagiellonian University by the Rector Prof. Karol Musiol and Prof. Maria Szewczyk, Vice-Rector for Educational Affairs. The historic building located at 1 Retoryka Street was renovated and all of its architectural barriers were removed. Thus students on wheelchairs have easy access to it. The office has been well equipped. It has a modern Braille monitor with speech synthesizer, a Braille printer, interactive boards and other facilities. Thanks to these technological tools students will be able to study at the same level as their healthy peers. ‘Openness to the needs of the disabled is an indicator of civilisation’s progress’, said Mr Ireneusz Białek, Head of the Office and the JU Disability Coordinator. It is worth adding that Mr Białek is blind. He graduated from JU where he studied journalism and political science.

The JU Disability Support Office was called into being in 1999 and at first located in Collegium Novum. Since its beginning it has collaborated with the Disability Support Office of the University of Aarhus, Denmark, adopting its creed: ‘As teachers, advisors and representatives of institutions, we must make efforts to ensure that the world is open to students and we may not close it. We are responsible for opening the world up and for offering, rather than restricting, opportunities that our students have and so their freedom lies in our hands. We can make the world wider or narrower. We can even shut it.’ (Willy Mr. Białek, the Head of the Disability Support Office)

The February 2008 issue of Alma Mater is its one hundredth. The Jagiellonian University magazine has been published since 1996. At first, it was a quarterly, then a bimonthly and a monthly since the year 2000. The other changes have been its growth in volume (it increased three times) and its circulation, which has almost doubled. The Alma Mater’s editor-in-chief has been Mrs Rita Pagacz-Moczarska since the beginning. Currently, the Alma Mater consists of the following sections: Actualia, Universalia, Scientia, Successus, Impressiones, Personae, Colloquium, Historia Magistra Vitae, Scholaris, Conventiones and Postscriptum.

Its one hundredth issue includes articles about the project of Kraków Academic Centre, which will embrace a Biotechnology Centre, a Material and Nanotechnology Centre, a Hadronic Radiotherapy (Cyclotron), a Biomass Energy Centre, a Synchrotron Radiation Centre and a new University Hospital. Other interesting subjects are the former Prussian collection in the Jagiellonian Library, the interview with Prof. Andrzej Szczeklik, director of II Surgery Chair, and Prof. Michał Rożek, a historian of art and culture, the academic career of Prof. Franciszek Zieja, former rector (1999-2005), the portraits of Prof. Andrzej Gawroński, an Orientalist, the poet and social activist Augustyn Suski. A large portion of this issue of Alma Mater has been devoted to university news.

M. Kantor
www.3.uj.edu.pl/alma/
On 7 December 2006, the Polish Sejm adopted a resolution declaring 2007 the year of Stanisław Wyspiański (28 November 2007 marked the 100th anniversary of his death). Stanisław Wyspiański (1869-1907) was the most versatile artist in the history of Kraków. He was an outstanding painter, a graphic artist, a playwright, a theatre producer, a poet and brilliant visionary. He studied painting in Kraków and Paris, was a student and later co-worker of Jan Matejko, Poland’s greatest historical painter.

As a multifaceted artist Wyspiański designed polychromes and stained glass windows for churches as well as interiors, furniture, costumes and stage decorations. He had also prepared many graphics and illustrations to books. He was the author of numerous literary works, first and foremost the great drama ‘Wesele’ [The Wedding]. At the end of his life he became a lecturer at the Academy of Fine Arts in Kraków. He was buried in the crypt in the Skalka Pauline Church in Kraków, in a national pantheon of people who rendered outstanding contributions to Polish culture. His funeral in 1907 was a major national event.

Many critics considered him to be the most creative individual in the history of Polish culture. His works still affect the thinking of many artists about art, in a variety of different fields. In fact, Wyspiański was one of the first artists in Europe to work in all the artistic genres. He combined modesty and artistic diligence with an original imagination. With his life and work, he defined humans as creative beings, fully responsible for their individual destinies and for the way they built interpersonal relations. Entering into a dialogue with his contemporaries and with the national tradition, in his works he constantly posed questions important in the past and today. He inspired and still inspires the greatest Polish artists.

One of Stanisław Wyspiański’s most famous works of art is located in the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi in Kraków. These are the stained glass windows, the most famous and the largest being ‘God the Father – Become! In his artistic vision Wyspiański presented God at the moment of creating water and dividing light from darkness. This image in some way praises energy, the power of nature and elements, which came to exist through the intervention of God. The other stained glass windows are located in the presbytery of the church. The image ‘Blessed Salomea’ presents her dropping the royal crown and ‘St Francis’ presents him at the moment of receiving the stigmata. There are four more stained glass windows with plant motifs which present the elements of fire and water. Wyspiański’s stained glass windows, designed between 1897 and 1902 are masterpieces. Their innovative methods continue to make a great impression on visitors. In 1885 he also designed and partly created the polychrome surfaces in the Gothic part of the church. They present natural images of Poland, particularly its flowers (see the background of this article).

Stanisław Wyspiański studied history of art at the Jagiellonian University in 1887-90. He founded the Circle of Aestheticians at the Faculty of History on 23 January 1888. The Circle has existed since then and on its 120th anniversary (on 23 January 2008) it organised a special session dedicated to Stanislaw Wyspiański in the Institute of History of Art. During the session Mrs Magdalena Kunińska, a doctoral student, presented Wyspiański’s activities in the Circle of Aestheticians. On 1 March 1888, the first general meeting of the Circle, Wyspiański was elected its secretary. The Circle meant to supplement the studies. All the students’ speeches were noted. Therefore, we know that Wyspiański studied the art of the Italian Renaissance and the Greek sculptures. Then he focused on the works of Italian painters. He gave talks on ‘The Italian influences on the Polish art’ and ‘The monuments of Kraków’ as well as on the demand for national art. According to him the aim of art was to ennoble: ‘art should give us what the environment cannot’. He boldly expressed his...
opinion that ‘the technique cannot save the artist.’ Wyspiański gave up his studies at the Jagiellonian University in 1889 to travel to Italy, Switzerland, France and Germany. After returning to Kraków in 1894 he soon became one of the distinguished representatives of the local modernism.

The session also included the talk of Mrs Anna Baranowa entitled ‘The consumed sanctity. From the Wawel projects to the Wyspiański Pavilion 2000’, concerning the three projects of Wyspiański’s stained glasses, which he had designed for the Wawel Cathedral but which had not been made in his lifetime. After 100 years a special pavilion named after the artist was opened in Kraków. Oscar-winning film director Andrzej Wajda, who staged and filmed many of Wyspiański’s plays, was the originator of the idea.

The final point of the session was the presentation and discussion about the new book by Professor Wojciech Bałus, the Director of the Institute of History of Art, entitled ‘Matejko and Wyspiański. Kraków’s Sacred Art in the 19th Century, part II’. The vivid discussion showed that although it has been a hundred years since Wyspiański’s premature death the emotions concerning the artist and his art still have not waned. The artist was a voice of protest against hypocrisy in everyday life.

The session in the Institute of History of Art ended the celebrations of the year of Stanisław Wyspiański, which abounded in numerous events, exhibitions, theatrical performances, concerts and academic meetings. The Jagiellonian University organised many conferences and sessions concerning the artistic genius of the artist who played a unique role in shaping the Polish awareness. It also prepared a special issue of its monthly ‘Alma Mater’ (No. 97/2007) totally devoted to the life and art of Stanisław Wyspiański. Various authors tried to fathom his artistic imagination expressed in literary works, paintings, drawings, stained glass windows, stage sceneries, furniture, etc. Their articles present Wyspiański’s life and artistic dilemmas as well as the Kraków’s houses he lived in: his grandparents’ house at 26 Krupnicza Street where Wyspiański was born, the Długosz House at 25 Kanonicza Street with windows looking out the Wawel Castle where Wyspiański’s father had his sculpture’s workshop and the house at 79 Krowoderska Street, where the artist settled with his family and where he had his ‘sapphire blue’ workshop.

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The last building was ‘the happiest’ place of the artist. It was there that he wrote his dramas Wesele [The Wedding], Noc listopadowa [November Night], Wyzwolenie [Liberation], Bolesław Śmiały, Akropolis. Furthermore, ‘Alma Mater’ presents several lost Wyspiański’s drawings and letters, the known and the unknown ones, which were unexpectedly discovered on the 100th anniversary of his death. It is worth mentioning that the Jagiellonian Library possesses some original letters of Wyspiański, a correction of his poetry with the author’s comments and a project of exlibris for Lucjan Rydel.

M. Kantor

When the day comes that I must leave this world behind…

Stanisław Wyspiański, 7 July 1903

Gdy przyjdzie mi ten świat porzucić, na jakąś nutę będę nucić melodię zgonu mą wyprawną? Rozmów przeżcię go już dawno.

Nad jaką rzeką, w jakimś mieście, gdzie słubowałem ślub niewieście, gdzie dom stworzyłem jej i sobie z myślą o jednym wspólnym grobie.

Niechże mi rano słońce świeci, niech świeci jasno, mocno grzeje. Nad grób niech przyjdą moje dzieci i niech się jedno z nich zaśmieje.

Translated by Maya Boncza
The Master of Arts in TransAtlantic Studies (TAS) is one of the Jagiellonian University’s newest programmes. TAS is a comprehensive, full time interdisciplinary postgraduate Master’s programme. It is designed primarily to accommodate foreign students who would like to study in Krakow. The program is taught entirely in English and focuses on the political and cultural aspects of the evolving relationship between the United States and Europe and how both are attempting to formulate common policies to deal with the vast changes in the world of international affairs. The graduates from the programme will receive a degree in cultural studies with a major in Transatlantic Studies. During the three semesters of studies the students are obliged to earn 90 ECTS points (European Credit Transfer System). The new programme will commence in the October 2008 and run through February 2010.

TAS Programme

The curriculum consists of compulsory and optional courses. Students enroll in optional courses of their choice–some of which are listed below.

TAS201 Introduction to Cultural Studies
TAS203 Transatlantic Migration
TAS204 Transatlantic Connections in Theatre, Movies and Literature
TAS208 US Foreign Policy: Patterns and Processes
TAS211 Military Aspects of Transatlantic Relations
TAS213 European and American Legal System: A Comparative Perspective
TAS215 Transatlantic Economics
TAS216 The Polish-Jewish Relations in the Context of Polish Foreign Policy
Poland-Israel-the US and European Community

Admissions

The new academic year will begin in October 2008. If you should like to join our programme the deadline for application is August 1, 2008. The tuition for the entire course of study is 4,500 euros. Students will be responsible for their own accommodation and board costs, insurance, travel expenses and study trips. This can be a daunting thought before arrival but all of our students arrived and found the experience rather trouble free. All of our courses are conducted in English and no previous knowledge of Polish language is necessary to attend the programme. If the language of your previous university level instruction was not English, you will be kindly requested to demonstrate a certificate authenticating your linguistic competence.

For more information about the Programme and application guidelines, please visit our web page: http://www.transatlantic.uj.edu.pl

The First Year of the Programme

On October 2, 2007 fourteen students from all over the world joined our TAS Programme. It was...
a great day for all of us. The official inauguration of the Programme could not have commenced without the patience and determination of the director of the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, professor Andrzej Mania. We were also joined by the guest from the US Consulate in Krakow, Public Affairs Officer, Susan Parker-Burns who gave our students a short speech on what they might expect during their extended visit in Poland.

Our classes are held at the Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, which is located on the fifth floor of a 19th century building directly overlooking Krakow’s world famous Market Square. Our students were immediately impressed by the breathtaking view of one of the most spectacular – if not underrated – sights in all of Europe.

We know that studying abroad can be a challenge, and we try to do everything to make the visit more convenient for our students. We have recently launched the Transatlantic Studies Intranet. It is the fastest and the most efficient way of communication between the professors and the students. Students can also use the service to publish news, exchange views and present opinions about particular courses.

Our students

In academic year 2007/2008 we have enjoyed a remarkable mix of students from different parts of the world–including the United States, Brazil, Columbia, Iran, China, Hong Kong, Germany, the United Kingdom and several students of Polish origin returning to their “ancestral roots.” Our courses are also opened for Erasmus students visiting the Jagiellonian University for a semester or two. This provides a very stimulating environment to learn “outside the classroom” and has provided our students with an opportunity to become familiar with various cultures without having to learn from the textbook.

TAS is a new programme and we are still developing new ideas and angles to best examine the transatlantic relationships. Therefore we kindly request students to submit their ideas and opinions on any matters they feel merit our attention – this may concern their opinions on classes, professors and the basic day-to-day organisation of the administration office.

This will provide us with fresh ideas and keep us better informed about how we can improve our programme. Here you can find some opinions of our students about the TransAtlantic Studies Programme:

TAS is a very well organised international programme; the professors are from the US, Britain and Poland; they are so nice and concerned about me. I love TAS!

Dan Zhao from China

In terms of education, the Transatlantic Programme is the most enriching experience that I have ever had. The courses are highly diverse and well presented. The professors are very passionate about their subject matter. I’ve had the opportunity to meet students from all over the world and really get immersed in Polish culture. Krakow is by far the most beautiful and exciting city in all of Europe. I would highly recommend this outstanding programme to everyone.

Alexandra Lisiecki from the United States

Should you have an additional questions please feel free to contact TAS office at: transatlantic@uj.edu.pl

Iwona Waga
The Jagiellonian Language Centre, the Confucius Institute and the Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in Warsaw organised a vernissage of the Chinese calligraphy by Mr Fu Haifeng in the Gallery of the JU Auditorium Maximum on 14-28 January 2008. Mr Fu Haifeng teaches Chinese at the Jagiellonian Language Centre.

Calligraphy, literally ‘beautiful writing,’ is one of the traditional four arts dating back to the earliest days of Chinese history. For the Chinese, calligraphy, the ancient art of the written word, is not just a method of communication but also a means of expressing the dynamic forces of the natural world. Calligraphy plays a central role in Chinese art and civilisation.

‘The Chinese scholars thought that calligraphy was liberation. In order to make calligraphy you must first free yourself of your feelings, let your imagination run away with you and express it in your writing’.1 Thus calligraphy was gradually changed into a refined activity to express and shape human character.

‘Is calligraphy a form of pure art?’ The Chinese answer that it is not by any means. Regardless of the beauty of the script it is ‘abstract art’ only for those who cannot read it. The content of the inscription cannot be an essential part, which contributes to the beauty of the whole work. On the other hand, in China calligraphy having vulgar or less edifying content, will not be regarded as beautiful and good.


The past several thousands of years have witnessed the evolution of Chinese characters. There are literally thousands of styles of Chinese calligraphy, of which the main four forms were presented in the exhibition.

The regular script (kăi shū) of the Wei dynasty (220-265) and Jin dynasty (265-420) is the basic kind of writing. The characters are fully readable, straight, precise and well expressed. Every stroke is carefully made. This is the handwriting taught at schools and all children practice it. It is also named square script.

The second type of script is the freehand cursive (xíng shū) of the East Han Dynasty (25-220 AD). It literally
means ‘running style’. The strokes are made with single movements of the brush. Some elements are omitted but the sign should be legible. This writing is a counterpart of the European handwriting. It is used both as handwriting and artistic style. It became the preferred writing style of the people.

The cursive developed into Gras Stroke Characters (cǎo shū) at the end of the Han Dynasty (25-220 AD). It is a swift style. The strokes became slightly linked and the radicals mutually interchangeable, with the traces retained in the cursive seal characters no longer visible. This script shows first of all an expressive artistic style, characterised by naturalness and ‘power of the brush’.

The official script (lí shū) was the formal written language in the Han Dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD). The official script symbolised a turning point in the evolution history of Chinese characters. Since that time, Chinese characters moved from an ancient to a modern stage of development. The characters are square and made by brush.

The Confucius Institute, located in the new campus of the Jagiellonian University was opened in September 2006 as the 108th institute of this kind in the world.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF PROF. JULIAN ALEKSANDROWICZ

On 22 February 2008, Collegium Medicum organised a scientific conference on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Professor Julian Aleksandrowicz, an outstanding haematologist, humanist and community worker. The main theme of the conference, besides the life and work of Prof. Aleksandrowicz, was the diagnostics and treatment of acute leukaemia. Prof. Aleksander Skotnicki, the head of the JU Chair of Haematology, presented the profile of Prof. Aleksandrowicz, the creator of the Kraków’s school of haematology.

Prof. Julian Aleksandrowicz (1908-1988) came from a Kraków family of Jewish descent. He completed medical studies at the Jagiellonian University in 1933. Then he worked in St Lazarus Hospital in Kraków. He was called up in 1939. He was arrested and taken to a war prisoners’ camp. He escaped from the camp in 1940 and arrived in Kraków. During the occupation he worked in the Jewish hospital, which, in the spring of 1941 was included in the ghetto. Dr. Aleksandrowicz left the ghetto with his wife and their seven year-old son through the sewers. With the help of many Poles whose cordiality, devotion and disinterestedness he described in glowing terms, Aleksandrowicz joined a partisan unit of the Home Army as its physician, under the alias of ‘Doktor Twardy’. He wrote his reminiscences in the book ‘Kartki z Dziennika Doktora Twardego’ [Pages from the diary of Doctor Twardy]. During the war he did not only organise medical service but also fought as a platoon commander. His bravery was honoured by a Virtuti Militari cross. After the war he became an assistant in the Internal Disease Department. In 1950, he was asked to create a clinic of haematology, which he directed for 28 years. He became a professor of medicine and a scholar of world renown in research on leukaemia. His research focused on morphology and functions of the blood cells. He formulated a theory of hemopoesis and nozography of blood diseases. He always fought for the humanization of relations between people.

The conference gathered representatives of the Polish haematological clinics and guests from the Institute of Blood Pathology in Lviv, Ukraine. It was also attended by representatives of the Association of Bone Marrow Transplantation Patients.

M. Kantor

00th anniversary of the birth of Prof. Julian Aleksandrowicz

L. Śliwa
THE CENTRE FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES AT JU

On 17 January 2008, the Centre for Holocaust Studies inaugurated its activities at the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University. The opening ceremony was held in the Libraria hall of Collegium Maius. At the beginning of the meeting Professor Wiesław Kozub-Ciembroniewicz, the Dean of the Faculty of International and Political Studies, welcomed the guests, representing the Jagiellonian University, the City of Kraków, the District of Małopolska, the Jewish Congregation in Kraków, the Memorial and Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, the Austrian Consulate, the US Consulate and various publishing houses. He also mentioned the letters of congratulation from the Yad Vashem Institute, the Israeli Ambassador in Warsaw as well as from various American and European institutions of higher education.

In his welcome speech Prof. Karol Musioł, JU Rector, said that there were such events in the history of mankind that we wanted not to have happened and Holocaust was one of them. He stressed the role of the Jagiellonian University in searching for and transmitting the truth, even the most painful one, and that memory should be objective.

Prof. Jacek Majchrowski, the President of Kraków, focused on Kraków as one of the first places in Poland that began Holocaust studies. Before World War II one fourth of the city’s population was Jewish and currently there remains only an empty space left behind by those citizens. The municipality makes various attempts to commemorate them. President Majchrowski mentioned the plans of creating a Memorial Museum and a special tourists’ route ‘Following the path of Kraków’s Jews’.

In turn, Prof. Zdzisław Mach, the Director of the Institute of European Studies at the JU, mentioned the beginnings of the Holocaust studies at the JU in the 1990s. He stressed that Holocaust studies belonged to the European heritage and should be conducted in the light of the European unification processes.

The methodological guidelines of Holocaust studies were presented by Prof. Kozub-Ciembroniewicz. He specified Holocaust as part of Fascism and totalitarianism, as an integral part of modern history the archives of which are still closed, and as part of the living witnesses. Holocaust teaches us what to avoid, namely the nationalistic socialism as a political religion with a charismatic leader who was a quasi messiah proposing the ideology of racism – the state became a political god and its leader became infallible. Hitler represented the German character and defined the criteria of the truth. His will was the decisive law. However, such an ideology would be impossible without Hegel’s philosophy and the tragedy of World War I, which resulted in finding the enemy: the Jews. The organised hatred and pathologies brought about the extermination of the Jews.

The director of the Centre for Holocaust Studies Dr. Jolanta Ambrosewicz-Jacobs talked about concrete strategies and projects of the Centre. She claimed that Holocaust studies should embrace the victims, the perpetrators and the witnesses. She stressed the need for historic and political education. The projects and plans of the Centre include summer courses for school teachers, an on-line course in collaboration with Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and endeavours with the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

It is also worth mentioning that participants of the ceremony received the book ‘Why should we teach about the Holocaust’ published by the Jagiellonian University. It is a collection of essays written by specialists representing the fields of history, philosophy, anthropology, literature, psychology, journalism, ethnography, theology, political sciences and sociology. The authors stress that the scale of the tragedy of the Jewish nation was unique in the 20th century. Understanding the sources of the Holocaust can perhaps give chances to avoid such tragedies in the future. The Jewish Holocaust concerns Poland and Poles in a special way since to a large extent it happened on Polish land and in the presence of the Polish people. The subject of the Holocaust and the Jewish-Polish relationships are the key issues to shape a new historical identity and a true reconciliation between Jews and Poles will be possible in the third generation after the Holocaust. Some authors warn against isolating the Holocaust from other tragedies. We are to build the spirit of universal solidarity and condemn any form of contempt, hatred and violence. Moreover, we are to find new ways of transmitting the knowledge concerning the Holocaust to change the attitudes of young people towards the Shoah. In fact, the memory of the Holocaust should be a warning against repeating any crimes of genocide.

M. Kantor

www.ces.uj.edu.pl/european/masters/holocaust.htm
This article presents my research in the Eastern Carpathian Mountains (the former Polish voivodeships of Stanisławów and Lwów) – on the history of tourism in this area. The Eastern Carpathians have a unique natural resource, which is the rich and interesting culture of their inhabitants, including the Boikos and Hutsuls as well as a long history of tourist movement, which was broken by the two world wars. Such names as Truskawiec, the Gorgany Mountains, Chornohora range, Slawsko, Vorokhta or Zabie, are inseparably connected with this territory, were perfectly known to many generations of tourists. In the first decades of the 19th century numerous clients, holidaymakers and tourists coming from the Austrian partition, constituting the contemporary intellectual elite to a large extent, visited those places. Apart from visiting the resorts they travelled in the wild territories of the Eastern Carpathians. They were above all charmed by the untouched beauty of the soaring mountains and the primeval Carpathian nature. They were also fascinated by the local inhabitants of Pokucie and their exotic culture. With time people’s interest (clients and tourists) in that land increased, which resulted in the need to make the areas abounding in mineral water and Chornohora (the highest mountain range in the Eastern Carpathians belonging to the Second Polish Republic) accessible in the first place by building medical treatment facilities as well as villas and tourist centres, by marking paths or publishing tourist guides. In the first decade of the 19th century the spas in Truskawiec and Chornohora became the most popular tourist regions in northern Galicia. The pioneering activities of numerous people and social organisations (especially the Tatra Society), which had begun in the period of the partitions, acquired a new meaning in restored Poland.

Before World War II the tourist development in the prevailing part of the Eastern Carpathians was

A view over Vorokhta, in 2007

Vorokhta – an old summer holiday house, in 2004
satisfactory and it was very good in the resort of Truskawiec, the valley of the Prut River and Chornohora. In the year 1938, there were as many as 28 mountain hostels, which were used all the time, and there were about 100 other places of accommodation, the majority being the buildings erected in the late 1930s. They were unevenly located in the territory in question. The Western Gorgany Mountains and the Eastern Bieszczady were less developed while Chornohora and the Eastern Gorganes had better infrastructure. Then the spa of Truskawiec was proud of its 40,000 clients. Contrary to the Tatra Mountains there was no recognisable, domineering style of building in the Eastern Beskids. Only in the 1930s the regional architectonic patterns for mountains hostels were successfully used. The mountain hostels located at the foot of Kostrzyca and Kukul as well as Pantyr and Steryszora were designed in the Hutsul style. The characteristic patterns of the Lemkos and Bojkos’ styles were not repeated in the tourist hostels. According to Prof. Lenkiewicz, the design made by Engineer Tadeusz Solecki (an architect from Lwow) was successful. He designed special architectural patterns for the mountain hostels in the Gorgany Mountains (and perhaps for the whole range of the Eastern Beskids).

The outbreak of World War II and its political consequences destroyed the achievements in the mountainous territories. Basically speaking, until the 1980s the tradition of the individual tourist movement was not continued. There were only large objects (tour bases) at the bottoms of the mountains and organised tourism existed only to a limited extent. In 1945 the spa of Truskawiec became a state place. In the following decades several new sanatoriums were erected there and the existing facilities were extended, which resulted in enormous frequency in the 1980s (over 430,000 in 1989).

Currently, tourism in the Eastern Carpathians is enjoying ever greater popularity but the well-deserved popularity has not been appropriately supported by developed tourist facilities. Nevertheless, this condition has made these mountains more attractive to foreign tourists than the strongly over-invested mountainous regions of Western and Central Europe. In recent years, partly because of the activities of some Polish tourist organisations, one can see many changes, for example the development of the facilities in Truskawiec, marking the main routes in the Gorgany Mountains and the enlargement of the ski complex Bukowel in Chornohora.

I have conducted research concerning the history of tourism in the territory of the Eastern Carpathians, which embraces the former Polish voivodeships of Stanisławów and Lwów, under the supervision of Professor Antoni Jackowski since 2003. As a fourth-year student of geography at the Jagiellonian University, together with my brother, I visited the area of the Hutsuls for the first time in 2003. And like the first researchers who had explored this area almost 150 years before, I was impressed by the beauty and majesty of those wild mountains and the friendly Hutsul people. That is how my adventure with the Eastern Carpathians began.

My research embraces numerous issues in the field of the geography of tourism, the tourist space, urban planning, the history of architecture and art. They have been based on rich
archival and library sources in the cities of Lviv (former Lwów) and Ivano-Frankivsk (former Stanisławów). I have taken over 400 photos of tourist facilities. Most of the collection has not been studied or presented to a wider audience yet. However, the most important thing is to visit these territories and make urban inventories and photographic documentation of the researched areas, at the same time doing interviews with the local people, consulting the representatives of the local government as well as tourist organisations and associations. The research has been conducted in collaboration with the scientists of the Chair of Tourism at the Ivan Franko State University in Lviv, the Watson Institute for International Studies, Providence, the Tourist Museum and the Museum of Art in Ivano-Frankivsk, the Department of Culture in the town of Kosovo near Ivano-Frankivsk and Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. Thanks to my first scientific visits I wrote my Master’s thesis, which concerned the activities of the Tatra Society/Polish Tatra Society in Chornohora. My further documentation work was ordered by the Department of International Cooperation and European Integration of Poland’s Ministry of Culture. In 2004, I worked on the project of documenting the old tourist-spa buildings in the territory of the Eastern Carpathians. I catalogued almost 200 buildings, together with their cartographic materials, sketches and photographic documentation. The essential element of the project was to identify the historical names of the buildings and to define the dates of their constructions. Furthermore, I had to consult specialists in other fields to complete the project. For three years I have developed my scientific interests within the framework of doctoral studies in the Institute of Geography and Spatial Management of the Jagiellonian University. Under the supervision of Professor Jackowski I am writing my dissertation entitled ‘The development of the tourist function of the Eastern Beskids in the years 1873-2006.’ I have presented the recent results of my research to Polish and Ukrainian audiences. Summing up, the history of the tourist development in Eastern Carpathians seems to have been surprisingly long, compared to the history of discovering the Polish Tatra Mountains, and it is exceptionally abundant in interesting events. The organisation, functioning and scale of the tourist movement in the years 1945-1991 still belongs to the least discovered pages of the history of tourism in this territory.

Łukasz Quirini-Popławski, MA,
Institute of Geography and Spatial Management
The JU School of Polish Language and Culture, the oldest, largest and most experienced in Poland, has prepared a new language programme for beginners ‘Four Seasons of the Year with Polish Language’.

In the summer of 2008 the School of Polish Language and Culture offers three- (4-24 July and 25 July – 14 August), four- (4-31 July) and six-week (4 July – 14 August) programmes. Besides languages courses the programmes include courses on Polish art, the history of Poland, the Jews in Poland, Polish literature and theatre in the 20th century, Business in the post-transition era, contemporary Poland and her society as well as video presentations of selected Polish films.

The tourist programme includes a sightseeing tour of Kraków’s Old Town and the Royal Castle, a tour of the Martyrdom Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, a trip to the ancient Salt Mine in Wieliczka, a trip to the Pieniny Mountains and the Tatras.

P. Horwatowski

Detailed information:
www.uj.edu.pl/SL
e-mail:plschoo@uj.edu.pl
We are an organisation that bands together the representatives of all scientific circles of the Jagiellonian University. We are responsible for the distribution of funds designated for the activities of various circles, we help in the communication between the circles; we coordinate their activities and we represent the circles before the JU authorities and other institutions. The work of CSC is coordinated by the chairman, chosen among presidents of the circles for a one year term of office. The Council consists of a secretariat, which improves the quality of the Council and the Circles.

We meet at quarterly meetings and on trip-trainings, during which we talk over current affairs, we introduce new ideas, we work out plans of collaborative activity. Our headquarters is located in the basement of Collegium Novum, room 06.

Apart from administrative tasks the Council of Scientific Circles promotes students’ participation in various activities of the scientific circles. There are over 70 scientific circles at the Jagiellonian University and more than 1,000 students actively involved in their activities. Our aim is to give a ground for integration among all students and to create a network of contacts, sufficient for various projects and events organised in our community.

The students’ Circles are not only a field of broadening knowledge and skills through conferences, scientific publications, study trips, seminars, working groups but also through cultural events organised periodically, such as: a Chinese evening, a Georgia Evening, a Balkan Evening, etc. Another type of events developed by the Council is an annual training trip outside Kraków, which gives a perfect opportunity to develop new projects, gain organisation skills and make new contacts among the members of the Circles.
To bring closer the activities of the Circles at Jagiellonian University, here are some recent activities of one of the most active Circles, the International Relations Students’ Association, which is situated at the Faculty of International and Political Studies:

− integration and training excursion to Zakopane (the Tatra Mountains);
− several open lectures given by significant Polish scientists on Polish Eastern policy in the EU, global trends of development in atomic energy, the UN system of human rights protection;
− scientific conferences: Russian policy towards the former Commonwealth of Independent States, Pakistan – past, culture and challenges to the contemporary world;
− open meetings on such subjects as terrorism, Russia, the European Union;
− study trips to Brussels (the EU Parliament), to Warsaw (the Centre of Eastern Studies) and to Georgia;
− publications: scientific periodicals, the magazine ‘Arena’ (twice in semester);
− training sessions: project management at the Jagiellonian University.

Detailed information about the latest events in the CSC can be found on our Internet site – http://www.rkn.uj.edu.pl, which is available in 5 languages. You can also contact the coordinator of International Contacts Section of the Council: ma.makowska@gmail.com

Marta Makowska

Beethoven and his Vienna

On 4 March 2008, the JU Rector Prof. Karol Musioł opened an exhibition of Beethoven’s manuscripts entitled ‘Beethoven and his Vienna’. He said ‘Music is an additional dimension in daily life. The exhibition displays the manuscripts of those who stretched this dimension to the stars.’ The exhibition accompanies the 12th Easter Festival of Ludwig van Beethoven to be held in Warsaw on 9-22 March. Over twenty manuscripts of Beethoven, Mozart, Cherubini, Haydn, Schubert and Bruckner from the collection of the Jagiellonian Library have been put on display. The manuscripts have been supplemented by their Vienna first editions as well as by graphics presenting Vienna’s daily life and the city plans.

The autographs of the great masters evoke the biggest emotions since they often reveal the characters of the composers. The exhibition presents Beethoven’s sketches, which were musical notes to his IX Symphony, Concert in C Major and String Quartet in f minor, revealed that the artist acted in haste: he scribbled and crossed out his notes. Whereas the autographs of Schubert (Symphony in B flat major), Mozart (Symphony in Es Major) or Bruckner (VIII Symphony in C minor) were made in small precise writing, without any corrections and cross-outs. It is interesting to see the manuscripts of Luigi Cherubini (e.g. the aria from the opera ‘Lodoiska’), which have not been exposed yet.

We wanted to present music in a larger context, to root it in Vienna, the city where it was composed or performed. Therefore, we have added Vienna’s graphics from our collection, including a cycle of satirical lithographs showing Vienna’s citizens’, explained Sylwia Heindrich, the curator of the exhibition. Vienna is undoubtedly a city of musical genius loci.

On the evening of the opening, Beethoven’s IX Symphony and Mozart’s Concerto for Flute in G Major were performed in the Kraków’s philharmonic hall by the Orchestra of Beethoven’s Academy and the choirs of the Jagiellonian University, of the Pontifical Academy of Theology, of the Krakow Philharmonic and of the Polish Radio, conducted by Michal Dworzyński.

J. Śliwa
Leiden University is the oldest institution of higher education in the Netherlands. Founded in 1575 by Wilhelm of Orange, since then the university has had many outstanding alumni. For some time the following thinkers were connected: Spinoza, Descartes, Cluvius or Boerhaave (Dutch professor of medicine, botany and chemistry). Currently, there are about 17,000 students and ca. 4,000 academic staff at Leiden. The University has 9 faculties (Archaeology, Arts, Creative and Performing Arts, Law, LUMC - Leiden University Medical Center), Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Philosophy, Social and Behavioural Sciences, Religious Studies) as well as a School of Management and a School of Education.

Its guiding principles are: international orientation (ca. 10% foreign students, most Master’s studies are conducted in English), focus on research and maintaining the quality of education and research. Leiden University belongs to the League of European Research Universities (LERU). It is also worth noticing that Leiden is one of the oldest cities in the Netherlands, located on the Northern Sea coast, a city of magnificent architecture and art. It is the birthplace of Rembrandt.

On 12-19 February 2008, I had the occasion to visit the University of Leiden on the invitation of Prof. Jürgen Zangenberg, director of the Chair of New Testament Exegesis and Early Christian Literature. Prof. Zangenberg is not only a specialist in the NT literature but also in the archaeology of Qumran, material culture of Galilee in the Roman period and Samaritan studies. The latter field was the basis of my contacts with Prof. Zangenberg as my scholarly interests concern history and literature of ancient Samaritans, and my doctoral dissertation concerns the history of Samaria in the Persian period in the light of the Wadi ed-Daliyeh discoveries.

During my stay at Leiden University I was able to meet scholars from the Faculty of Religious Studies. I would like to express my gratitude to the Dean Prof. W. B. Drees. The main purpose of my stay at the University of Leiden was to consult my research project and doctoral dissertation. I received great help and valuable comments from Prof. Zangenberg and Dr. Johannes Tromp, whom I wholeheartedly want to thank. Furthermore, I want to express my gratitude to the JU Doctoral Students’ Society that financed my trip to Leiden within the framework of VI Contest of Financing Doctoral Students’ Activities.

Michał Marciak
Judaic studies

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Currently, the Jagiellonian University collaborates with 170 institutions of higher education (102 agreements on the general level, 40 – on the faculty level and 28 – on the institute level).

In the year 2007 the JU signed the following agreements of co-operation:

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Michał Marciak
Judaic studies
At the basis of the relationships between the JU Institute of Art History and the Institute of Architecture History (Mimarlık Tarihi Anabilim Dali) of the Istanbul Technical University (ITÜ) lay my scholar contacts with Prof. Aygül Ağır, who has already participated in two interdisciplinary conferences on Mediterranean issues organised by the JU Institute of History (2004, 2006). But the formal cooperation has started recently. Last year both institutes signed an Erasmus agreement, including Teaching Staff Mobility, for the academic year 2007/2008. Within the framework of this exchange the first teacher to deliver lectures was the beneath undersigned (my visit took place on 8-17 February 2008).

Established as ‘Muhendishane-i Bahr-i Hamuyun’ (The Royal School of Naval Engineering) in 1773, during the time of the Ottoman Sultan Mustafa III, Istanbul Technical University has continued to develop in parallel with the city. Its responsibility was to educate chart masters and ship builders. In 1795, the ‘Muhendishane-i Ber-i Hamuyun’, The Royal School of Military Engineering, was established to educate the technical staff in the army. In 1847, education in the field of architecture was also introduced. Established in 1883, the School of Civil Engineering assumed the name “Engineering Academy”, with the aim of teaching essential skills needed in planning and implementing the country’s new infrastructure projects. Gaining university status in 1928, the Engineering Academy continued to provide education in the fields of engineering and architecture until it was incorporated into ITÜ in 1944. Finally, in 1946, ITÜ became an autonomous university which included the Faculties of Architecture, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Electrical and Electronic Engineering. Today, ITÜ’s 21,000 students study in one of 5 campuses (Taşkışla, Gumussuyu, Maçka, Tuzla, and Ayazağa/Maslak) located throughout Istanbul.

The proposal of the subjects for the lectures in Istanbul resulted from the expected interest of the Turkish student audience. All lectures were given in the building of the Faculty of Architecture, Taşkışla (‘Stone Barracks’), the historic building situated close to the Taskim square on the northern side of the Golden Horn. My first lecture entitled *Genoese Souvenirs in Turkey: The Black Sea Coast* dealt with the difficult and still not thoroughly examined issue of the architectonical remains of the Italian colonies in the Black Sea basin (13-15th centuries). Besides the striking monuments of Amasra and the less significant ones in Samsun and Trabzon, the other localisations are still very questionable. The on-site visits paid in August 2007 along the Turkish Black Sea coast gave me the opportunity to illustrate the lecture with rich and mainly unpublished photo material. "Tartar and Turkish Monuments in the Crimea" were especially intriguing for the Turkish scholars because Crimea is the place where not only the Cuma Camii (‘Friday Mosque’) designed by Sinan, the most famous Ottoman architect, but also the Turkish fortresses, baths, ‘tekke’ (dervish monasteries) and other monuments, dating back to 15-18th centuries still stand to this day. However, the Crimean ‘Islamic’ artistic heritage, well known to the Polish romantic poets (e.g. Adam Mickiewicz), includes mainly Tartar monuments. The striking similarities of one of them, Canike Hanım türbe in Chufut-Kale, to the Seljuk Turkish art are of special interest. I could illustrate my lecture not only with traditional slides from my scientific trips of 1996-1997 and 2002, but also with short videos. Both lectures were given to postgraduate students, but were also attended by some members of the teaching staff of the Institute of the Architecture History as well as by some academics from other Istanbul universities (e.g. from the Institute of Art History of the Istanbul University). At the ‘Genoese’ lecture several representatives of the Istanbul Italian community including Luca Orlandi, PhD, (Genoese himself?) were also present. The long discussions that followed the lectures seemed to indicate that the choice of subject matter...
really responded to the interests of the audience. The third lecture entitled *Podolia. Architectonical Heritage of the Kamaniçe Vilayeti* was delivered to over 70 undergraduate students. Its aim was to present the values of the landscape and monuments of Podolia, the region, which was the most northern, although short-lasting, conquest of the Ottomans, who established a centre of their province (*vilayet*) in Kamieniec (*Kamaniçe*). That is why the minaret still stands next to the Kamieniec cathedral and there is a Muslim pulpit (*minbar*) in it. The region is of very special significance in the history of the Polish-Turkish relationships, but for many young auditors it was also an opportunity to discover the richness of the multicultural heritage of Podolia and the lamentable state of preservation of some of the monuments as well. The lecture was illustrated by slides, which were taken during my study trips to Podolia in 1997-1999 in the framework of the documentation of the churches in Ukraine, organised and performed by the JU students of art history.

An additional merit of my visit to Istanbul was the opportunity to visit two other places (Enez and Kilyos), treated as research concerning the Genoese monuments in Levant. Even in the grievous cold of the wind blowing from the Thracian Sea, followed by the real ‘attack of winter’ on the North of Turkey, the rich remains of the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Genoese and Ottoman periods in Enez made a great impression on me although their condition, compared to the one visible in the early 20th century photos by the British scholar W. Hasluck, has deteriorated to a considerable extent.

The cooperation between the Jagiellonian University and the Istanbul Technical University has only just started. Prof. Aygül Ağır is going to pay a visit to Kraków in May 2008 and deliver a series of lectures about the Seljuk Architecture and the Venetian presence in Constantinople. In December 2007, the Erasmus agreement between our universities was extended until 2013, which means that there will be both student and teaching staff mobility. It is worth adding that at the ITÜ Faculty of Architecture at least 30% of lectures are held in English both by the permanent ITÜ staff and international scientists, among whom the visiting Erasmus teachers are of considerable quantity. There are also plans to start some direct scientific cooperation.

www.itu.edu.tr

Rafał Quirini-Popławski,
Institute of History of Art
On 11 February 2008 Israel welcomed me with sunny weather both in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, which was my destination – a research stay at the Hebrew University. As a doctoral student in the Department of Jewish Studies, the Faculty of History at the Jagiellonian University, I have received an EU grant within the framework of the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window Programme.

The Programme includes 10 European universities and 10 universities in Egypt, Palestine and Israel (the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Ben Gurion University of the Negev). Besides my ‘Alma Mater’ there are Erasmushogeschool Brussels (Belgium), Agraren Universitet Plovdiv (Bulgaria), Chemikotechnologichen Metalurgichen University of Sofia (Bulgaria), Universite Lille 2 Droit et Santé (France), Universitá di Roma La Sapienza (Italy), Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain), Sabancı Universities (Turkey), Cardiff University, (United Kingdom) and Vrije Universiteit Brussels (Belgium), which co-ordinate the project.

In the academic year 2007/2008 the scholarships have been given to Bachelor, Master, doctoral students as well as postdoc researchers. They vary from 800 to 1,800 euros. Currently, the scholarships have been granted to numerous students and researchers going to Egypt, two postdoc researchers to Palestine and six grants to Israel. The programme will also enable Middle Eastern researchers to stay at the partner universities in Europe. The 6 million budget of the Programme will finance about 270 people’s studies and researches.

After my arrival in Israel I had to deal with all the formalities but I had also some time to visit the Old Town in Jerusalem, which is the spiritual and intellectual centre of Jewish studies. I am thankful to Mr Joel Alpert, Mrs Yochi Moshe (co-ordinator of the project), Mrs Iris Avivi, Mrs Hagit Ziv and Mrs Linda Lipstein from the Hebrew University for their warm welcome and help.

I hope that my stay at the Hebrew University will further my knowledge concerning Jewish studies and will let me make considerable progress in writing my doctoral dissertation.

M. Marciak

On 13 January 2008 an extraordinary New Year’s concert of Christmas carols was held in Auditorium Maximum at the Jagiellonian University. It was given by seven academic choirs: of the Jagiellonian University Almae Matris Iagellonicae (a male voice choir conducted by Z. Magiera, a female voice choir conducted by A. Gertner and a mixed choir conducted by W. Siedlik), of the Agricultural University, conducted by J. Gutowska-Kuźmicz, of the Technical University ‘Cantata’, conducted by M. Stós, of the Pontifical Academy of Theology ‘Psalmodia’, conducted by W. Siedlik and of the Pedagogical University ‘Educatius’, conducted by A. Korzeniowski. Over 1,000 people listened to various Polish carols for almost two hours. The singing was interwoven by recitation of the poems by Jan Twardowski, Cyprian Kamil Norwid, Czesław Miłosz and Adam Mickiewicz.

M. Kantor
Experiencing Poland

It was Good Friday in Kalwaria Zebrzydowska, a rural Polish town about 60 kilometers west of Kraków, my five-month home during a semester of study abroad. I had come to Kalwaria as a spectator, hoping to see the town’s heralded passion plays – the reenactments of Jesus’ last hours which attract thousands of Catholic pilgrims each year. Some confusion with the PKP, Poland’s always-entertaining rail system, had made progress difficult and I reached the town’s sanctuary only to find shop vendors closing up – the pilgrims had come and gone. As I walked the steep road among the church and its adjacent buildings, I encountered a white-haired man speaking English to a stray dog. After having struggled with Polish all day, I felt compelled to speak with a fellow anglophone. I said hello and the man stood up, revealing his collar – he was a retired priest from Ontario who had come to Kalwaria’s Franciscan seminary for Lent. He offered to buy me a bowl of barszcz, and we talked for a long time about Polish Catholicism and my failed attempt to observe the Kalwaria’s Good Friday tradition. He introduced me to a Polish Franciscan monk and showed me the interior grounds of the seminary, an area which is normally closed to visitors. He left me with a rosary inscribed with the image of the late Pope, Poland’s national and spiritual hero. I keep it on my desk not so much as a religious symbol, but as a reminder of that Friday in Kalwaria. It’s grown to become one of my enduring symbols from my time in Poland.

About a year ago now, and months before that day in Kalwaria, I was preparing to leave home for a semester abroad in Kraków at the Jagiellonian University. I had grown used to the same question: You’re studying in Poland – why Poland? And oddly enough, I arrived in Poland only to encounter a slight variation: Why did you choose Poland? Do you have Polish roots? Many Americans do, but as my last name suggests, my roots lie in Poland’s beloved western neighbor. Heritage and motives aside, Poland interests me for the very reason which places it in the periphery of many American minds: Poland has been beaten, many times. The Swedes, Tartars, Napoleon, Hitler, and Stalin have all occupied it. From 1795 until 1918, and again in 1939, Poland ceased to exist on the map. From 1945 until 1989 it fell under oppressive Soviet hegemony. Despite this history, the Polish culture and people have endured. Of course, there are contradictions in modern Poland. Soviet-style apartment buildings stand blocks away from beautiful medieval streets; overt displays of anti-Semitism and homophobia erupt amongst packs of soccer hooligans. But in places like Kalwaria and Kraków, especially, one sees not so much the evidence of human suffering, but rather the vitality of a surviving nation.
I studied at the Centre for European Studies, just a few streets away from Rynek Główny, Kraków’s picturesque medieval square, the largest of its kind in Europe. Walking to class each day, usually dodging pigeons on cobblestone, obwarzanki in hand, I could sense that I was living in Poland’s historic and cultural epicenter. My dorm, Nawojka, though about twenty minutes west of the city center, was located in a part of Kraków just as interesting as the Rynek. I was a few hundred feet from a large technical college, AGH, and Wisła Stadium, home to one of Kraków’s two soccer teams. I got to observe Polish students and soccer supporters in their natural elements. Needless to say, I learned quickly not to support Cracovia or Legia Warszawa, the neighborhood’s most hated soccer rivals. At night, I used to jog laps around the Błonia, a vast meadow and the site of Pope John Paul II’s homecoming mass services. I can still see the spires of Wawel Castle and St. Mary’s Church lit up in the distance.

Down the hall from me were Polish students, a handful of Polish American masters students, and, of course, my fellow American undergraduates. I have fond memories of ducking under my clothes as they dried on our improvised indoor clothesline; of placing salami and beer outside on the windowsill, our improvised refrigerator; of attempting to order a pizza by phone in Polish. I remember the encouraging smiles of the dorm’s cafeteria workers as I tried to pronounce words like “hey” (cześć) and the number thirty-three (trzydzieści trzy). My suitemate Monica was always so happy when I’d ask her for help with my Polish homework. I can’t explain the rule, she would say. I’m just grateful I was born knowing how to speak it.

My classes were small, and I took them mostly with European exchange students. When I wasn’t observing the intricacies of Polish culture on the street outside, I was learning the finer points of Belgian, German, and French culture in my classrooms. I still keep in touch with a few of my European friends by email. Never before did I imagine I would have friends in Brussels, Bremen, or Vienna whom I could visit or perhaps persuade to visit me on the western side of the Atlantic. Already, I’ve taken the opportunity to see a few Polish friends in Chicago. (It was convenient – there are only so many cities in the U.S. where one can practice the Polish language.)

It is hard to say which is more significant to me – the connections I made with my roommates and peers or the connection I made with Poland, in general. For all of the harrowing moments there – many of them involving the challenging-but-beautiful language – Poland made itself strangely and warmly accessible to me, more so than any other place I have visited in Europe. I plan on returning to Poland this summer. Although Kraków will be high on the priority list, I hope to spend some time in Gdańsk studying the city’s small German-speaking minority – yet another vestige of Poland’s complex history. Provided I can find a way, I can’t foresee a reason not to return to Poland in the future, even if only for a short time. It is, after all, a quickly changing place with a magnetic brand of charm. Perhaps I’ll make it back to Kalwaria, as well. I’ll be certain to catch a glimpse of the passion plays.

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