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Regarding the 625th Anniversary of the Erection of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Krakow. Research Status and Prospects

ABSTRACT

The article reveals the status and prospects of research on the history of the Theological Faculty of the University of Krakow. To this end, the most important scholarly items relating to the history of the faculty from its establishment in 1397 to the present day are discussed. The author stresses the need to undertake new research, including on the biography and works of professors, as well as in relation to the period 1525–1780. The second part of the text briefly discusses the content of eight articles revealing new findings to the history of the Faculty, published in the same issue of the *Perspectives on Culture* journal.

KEYWORDS: Faculty of Theology of the University of Krakow, Polish university historiography, Krakow intellectuals

STRESZCZENIE

Wokół 625. rocznicy erygowania Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego. Stan i perspektywy badań

Artykuł ukazuje stan i perspektywy badań nad dziejami Wydziału Teologicznego Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego. W tym celu zostały omówione najważniejsze pozycje naukowe odnoszące się do historii Fakultetu, począwszy od jego powstania w 1397 r. po czasy współczesne. Autor podkreśla konieczność podjęcia nowych badań, m.in. na gruncie biografistyki i twórczości profesorów, jak również w odniesieniu do okresu 1525–1780. W drugiej części tekstu omówiono pokrótce treść ośmiu artykułów ukazujących nowe ustalenia do dziejów Fakultetu, opublikowanych w tym samym numerze czasopisma „Perspektywy Kultury”.

SŁOWA KLUCZE: Wydział Teologiczny Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego, polska historiografia uniwersytecka, intelektualiści krakowscy

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January 11, 2022 marked the 625th anniversary of Pope Boniface IX's issuance of the bull, which, as a result of the supplication of Jadwiga of Anjou and Vladislaus Jagiello, included permission to establish a Faculty of Theology at the University of Krakow.¹ The Holy Father stressed on this occasion that through this action "the honor of God's name and the Catholic faith is expanded, justice is maintained, state and private affairs are conducted with benefit, all human prosperity is multiplied" ([Bonifacy IX], 1977, pp. 7–8; Markowski, 1996, pp. 244–245; Graff, 2022a, p. 45).

Over the centuries of the Theological Faculty's history, the most prestigious of all faculties in the Old Polish period, many outstanding scholars worked there, as an elite of the university, often serving as rectors (Lechicki, 1974; Pietrzyk, 2000; Zdanek, 2016). Some of them have made a name for themselves not only as theologians, but also as representatives of other sciences. Members of the faculty have made great contributions if only as excellent Church historians, whose research remains largely relevant today. Particularly distinguished in this field were, for example, Fr. Jan Fijałek, d. 1936 (Vetulani, 1970; Vetulani, 1974; Piech, 2000; Urban, 2010) and Fr. Tadeusz Glemma, d. 1958 (Piech, 2000; Prokop, 2008). It is also significant that many of the faculty's professors have been considered saintly, and two of them were canonized: the 15th century professor, St. John Cantius (d. 1473), canonized in 1767 (Zawadzki, 1991), and the university's rector, later Bishop of Przemyśl, St. Józef Sebastian Pelczar (d. 1924), canonized in 2003 by St. John Paul II (Glemma, 1957; Niezgodna, 1991; Niezgodna, 1991; Kubiś & Wolczanski, eds., 2005). The Servant of God Isaiah Boner, who died in 1471, was also associated with the Theological Faculty as a lecturer (Szelińska, 1997), while St. Józef (Biba) Bilczewski (d. 1923) received his doctorate and later his habilitation precisely at the Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University (Lewicki, 1971). Karol Wojtyła, now a saint, was also closely associated with the faculty, where he was employed as an assistant for a time. In 1953 he received approval for his habilitation by the very decision of the Council of the Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University. This habilitation, however, was not approved by the state authorities (Wiszczyński, 2007–2008).² Karol Wojtyła, as pastor of the Krakow archdiocese, took care of the Faculty of Theology, which was still

1 On this occasion, a scientific conference was held in the Auditorium of the Collegium Novum of the Jagiellonian University on 17 January 2022 *625 years of the Faculty of Theology in Krakow* co-organized with the host site by the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow.

2 Karol Wojtyła's habilitation was re-approved by a decision of the ATK Senate in 1955: <https://muzeumuksw.edu.pl/items/show/219> (access: 30.12.2022), and did not receive a consultancy until 1957; see Boniecki, 2000.

operating in the city, and which, due to circumstances, limited its activities to the training of seminarians. In 1974, Archbishop Wojtyła succeeded in obtaining the transformation of the Faculty of Theology into the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, so that already as Pope, by virtue of the “Beata Hedvigis” *motu proprio* of December 8, 1981, he was able to establish the Pontifical Academy of Theology with three faculties initially operating: theology, philosophy and Church History (Dyduch, 1994; Urban 2020; Urban, 2022). On June 19, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI transformed the Pontifical Academy of Theology into the Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow (Piech, 2013).

The history of the Theological Faculty of the University of Krakow has long attracted the interest of historiography. Unfortunately, many of the old findings today require verification and a new perspective. Moreover, there are still uncharted areas that await researchers’ attention. So far, admittedly, the various periods of the faculty’s operation have been studied in a synthetic way, but unfortunately, not all of them. The Theological Faculty has monographs on the years 1397–1525 (Markowski, 1996), 1780–1880 (Kanior, 1998), 1880–1939 (Piech, 1995) and 1939–1954 (Barcik, 2001) and 1954–1981 (Kubiś, 2005). Tadeusz Glemma (1949) also devoted a work to the history of the Faculty from 1795 to 1847.³ Thus, the period 1525–1780 is the least recognized. This acute gap in the historiography is without more than 320 years of the history of the Faculty.⁴

Significantly, the moment when the Faculty was founded and the first decades of its functioning are of particular interest among researchers. This is understandable, because the foundation of the Faculty is inextricably linked to the life and activities of Queen Jadwiga of Anjou and her husband Ladislaus Jagiello, to whom historians usually devote much attention, secondly – here we are dealing with the topos of the beginning, which, after all, always attracts scientists.⁵ In addition, certainly the Faculty of Theology had its golden period in the late Middle Ages, and its members, outstanding intellectuals, were then widely known abroad, especially in the era of the conciliar movement and the temporary triumph of the conciliarist idea, of which the University of Krakow was one of the

3 In 1997, a study was published, which, unfortunately, by its nature, rather superficially, presented the entire history of the Faculty from 1397 to the 2nd half of the 20th century (Piech, 1997). Cf. also: Lewicki, 1958; Dutkova, 1965; Bartel, 1969; Dobrzanowski, 1972; Rechowicz, ed., 1974–1977; Perkowska, 1975; Piech, 1989–1990; Piech, 1990; Piech, 1994a; 1994b; Barcik, 1995; Piech, ed., 2000; Sondel, 2012.

4 Cf., e.g., Barycz, 1947; Glemma, 1948; Wicher, 1948; Morawa i Postawa, eds., 1998; Piech, 1998–1999; Piech, 2013; Graff, 2019.

5 Cf., e.g., Graff, 2022b; Stopka, 2003; Stopka, 2005; Wyrzumska, 2002a; Wyrzumska, 2002b; Markowski, 1989–1990.

main and last bastions in Europe (Fijałek, 1898; Fijałek, 1900; Rechowicz, 1964; Bucichowski, 1987; Wünsch, 1998; Świerczyńska, 2001; Ożóg, 2004; Włodek, 2011; Ożóg, 2012).

Of course, with the help of a deeper recognition of the history of the Faculty comes a number of detailed studies (e.g. Piech, 1993; Piech, 1994a; 1994b; Kubiś, 2008; Luczak, 2015), very rare studies of the general biographies of professors (e.g., Kubiś & Wołczański, eds., 2005; Prokop, 2008; Graff, 2018), entries, e.g., in the *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, ed., 1935–2022) and the *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich* (Wyczawski, ed., 1981–1983), as well as synthetic depictions of the history of the University of Krakow (Bąkowski, 1900; Czermak, 1900; Morawski, 1900; Wojciechowski, 1900; Barycz, 1935; Chamcówna, 1957; Chamcówna, 1959; Chamcówna i Mrozowska, 1965; Lepszy, ed., 1964; Stopka, Banach i Dybiec, 2000)⁶. Among the above-mentioned types of publications, the biographic literature on Krakow university theologians is meager. Suffice it to mention that, in the modern period, only Marcin Campius Wadowita has so far received a full monographic treatment (Graff, 2018), and broader studies of the activities or works have only a few modern theologians, such as Stanisław Sokołowski – *nota bene*, never incorporated into the Faculty of Theology (Cichowski, 1929; Usowicz, 1946; Bracha, 1947; Bieńkowski 2000; Ryczek, 2011), Jakub Górski (Morawski, 1892; Piech, ed., 2000; Wyszogrodzka, 2016), Andrzej Schoneus (Rössel, 1957; Chachaj, 1992/1993;), or Adam of Opatów (Greniuk, 1976; Bereziński, 1983;) and Szymon Makowski (Wicher, 1926). Besides, not all of the aforementioned were in the field of interest of researchers because of their theological thought, but, for example, were seen primarily as poets and philosophers. This group also may include Jan Brożek, who, however, is better known to science as an outstanding mathematician, although he was also a theologian (Franke, 1884; Dianni, 1949; Barycz, 1956). Dozens of other theologians certainly deserve broader accounts of their lives and works, which in the future will provide a better understanding of the history and functioning of the Faculty. This is all the more important because old views, taken mainly from the great syntheses of the history of the University of Krakow and the city of Krakow, have lingered in science for years. Their authors, without a broader recognition of the value of the theological work of the Faculty's environment, or repeating the views of

6 Editions of sources relating to the functioning of the Theological Faculty are also particularly valuable. Cf., e.g. Szujski, 1878. In addition, it is worth noting the emergence of an online tool (a project of the Jagiellonian University Archives), where it is possible to find basic biographical data on theologians (as well as other professors and students of the Krakow Academy until the end of the pre-partition era): CAC: Corpus academicum Cracoviense <https://cac.historia.uj.edu.pl/> (access: 02.01.2023).

their predecessors, too freely repeated the opinions about the alleged deep scientific regression in particular periods of history, including the era of the electoral kings, unilaterally presenting, for example, the process of deepening confessionalization of the university as the primary cause of the regression of the institution.⁷ Today, these views are increasingly being rejected, while at the same time the need to undertake new research on this issue is postulated (Zdanek, 2017; Graff, 2018).

In light of the above considerations, each study containing new findings on even a small slice of the history of the Theological Faculty is eagerly awaited by the scientific community. The collection of eight studies presented in this volume hopefully satisfies these expectations. Significantly, as many as six articles deal with the early period of the Faculty's functioning – from its beginnings to the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries, while two of them already refer to the 19th and 20th centuries.

The first one '*Exultante spiritu*'. *Dominicans and the Establishment of a Theological Faculty at the University of Krakow* by Tomasz Gałuszka, O.P., presents two hypotheses relating to the foundation of the University of Krakow in 1364, as well as the establishment of the Faculty of Theology in 1397 in light of the history of the Dominican Order in Krakow. The author speculates that the lack of a theological faculty in the first university foundation in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland is related to the functioning of a Dominican theological study in the city. The second hypothesis refers to Pope Alexander IV's bull *Exultante spiritu* of March 28, 1257 (edition and Polish translation in appendix). The document included a privilege stating that Dominicans could teach theology in Krakow without obtaining university degrees until a university was established in the city. This provision, according to T. Gałuszka, could have caused great tensions among Dominicans, implying the need for a new personnel policy in their study. Presumably, therefore, the Dominicans were not very enthusiastic about Boniface IX's 1397 bull with permission to establish a theological faculty within the University of Krakow.

The second article, *Social and Ecclesiastical Activities of Professors of the Krakow Faculty of Theology in the 15th century*, by Krzysztof Ożóg, presents how university theologians within the structures of the society were seen in the Middle Ages. The author also answers the question of whether this thought found a reception in the Krakow environment in the 15th century. In addition, the article contains a meticulous characterization of the group of more than 70 masters of theology teaching in Krakow at the end of the Middle Ages, with an indication of their role in the state and the Church during this period, emphasizing, among other things, the

7 Cf., e.g. Lepszy, ed., 1964; Bieniarzówna, 1984.

influence of theologians on the history of the conciliarist movement, their impact on society in preaching, as well as the importance of pastoral and moral works in the context of shaping the formation of parish clergy.

Dorota Żurek explores the activities of Jan Sacranus in her *The Activities of Jan Sacranus of Oświęcim Sacrae Theologiae Professoris (1443–1527) as a Parish Priest in Proszowice*. This element of Sacranus' biography has not been widely analyzed by researchers so far. The author, mainly on the basis of the town books of Proszowice, tries to answer the question: how did this outstanding theologian fulfill his parsonage obligations? In light of the results, she sketches a picture of a caring pastor and a protector of the poor, for whom he founded a hospital in Proszowice. The paper also contains new findings relating to the foundation itself, and is a very good contribution to the discussion of the role of university professors in the history of the local community in which they served as parsons during the Old Polish period.

Marek Wasilewicz describes the land of the chapter of St. Florian in his *The Estate of the Collegiate Church of Saint Florian as a Financial Asset of the Faculty of Theology at the Turn of the 15th and 16th Centuries*. Theological scholars were often members of the St. Florian chapter, thus the analysis presented by M. Wasilewicz is an important contribution to the broader problem of the material basis of the functioning of the entire University of Krakow in the Middle Ages and in the modern era. The author also tries to estimate the real income of the Kleparz collegiate estate, which he believes amounted to 479 *grzywnas* and 4 *grosz* annually. The estimates made make it possible to compare the income from the St. Florian prebendaries with the income received from other benefices (including those in other collegiate churches and the Krakow chapter) by university scholars.

A new look at the problem of confessionalization of the Krakow university is presented by Maciej Zdanek in the article "*Universitas haec catholica.*" *The Faculty of Theology and the Path to the Catholic Confessionalization of the University of Krakow in the 16th Century*. The author shows the role of the academic community, mainly masters of theology, in preserving and defending the Catholic identity of the university in the era of the Reformation and the Catholic Reformation. M. Zdanek relates his considerations to 3 periods: the first (1520–1548), in which he discusses the university's reaction to the spread of Reformation thought, the second (1549–1572), when the university, finding itself in a multi-faceted crisis, firmly took the side of the Church, actively engaging in the confessional polemics, and the third (1573–1603), when the Catholic camp in Poland and in Krakow achieved a systematic advantage over Protestants, and confessionalization processes deepened at the university. However, the author does not consider confessionalization through the pejorative clichés of the

old historiography, but points to the values it brought with it, if only in the context of consolidating the Catholic identity of the university. He also points to the need for in-depth research into the work of Faculty members, who have sometimes been wrongly accused in the literature of passivity and intellectual shallowness.

The relationship between the Faculty of Theology and the St. Florian Collegiate Church during the reign of the first electoral kings of Poland is dedicated to the consideration of Thomas Graff in his article *University Theologians in the Chapter of St. Florian's Collegiate Church in Kleparz at the End of the 16th and Beginning of the 17th Centuries*. The author points out the importance of the St. Florian prebendaries obtained by the university in light of documents from 1559 and 1578. He also points out that the list of the prelates, starting with Stanisław Sokołowski, was identical to the list of the university's most prominent theologians. T. Graff further stresses that the Faculty's ties with the Kleparz Collegiate Church were strongly accentuated by the so-called Reformation of Mikołaj Dobrocieski in 1603/1604. According to its records, as many as eight out of ten chairs of theology were linked to holding a prebendary in the Saint Florian chapter. The article also portrays the staff crisis evident especially at the beginning of the 17th century, from which, however, the Faculty emerged quite quickly, thanks in part to theologians sitting in the stalls of the Saint Florian Chapter, such as Andrzej Schoneus, Daniel Sigoniusz, Bazyli Goliniusz, Marcin Campius Wadowita, Jakub Turobojski, Maciej Blosiusz, Wojciech Borowski, Jakub of Uście Papenkowicz, Paweł Herka and others. The author also stresses the need to undertake a systematic study of the biographies of theologians of the time, while pointing to the revival of the teaching of theology within the walls of the University during the period in question. Another demand stressed in the article is the need for in-depth research into the personal relationships between professors.

In the text by Józef C. Kałużny, the question whether Fr. Józef Bilczewski was a candidate to head the chapter of dogmatics at the Theological Faculty is pondered (*Was Fr. Józef Bilczewski a Candidate for the Chair of Dogmatic Theology at the Faculty of Theology of the Jagiellonian University?*). In light of the sources shown, the author is inclined to answer in the affirmative to the question posed in this way, at the same time showing plans for reorganization within the structure of the Theological Faculty. Indeed, the transfer of the chair to Bilczewski was connected with the idea of separating it from the chapter of Christian philosophy. The authorities of the Theological Faculty in Krakow were favorable to Bilczewski's hiring, but eventually the future saint received a job as an associate professor of special dogmatics at the University of Lwów, which, according to the author, gives rise to a separate consideration of this topic in the future.

The last text by Fr. Jacek Urban discusses Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński's (1956–1958) efforts to return the Faculty of Theology to Jagiellonian University in reports from faculty members to the Primate of Poland (*Efforts for the Restoration of the Faculty of Theology to the Jagiellonian University in Reports of Faculty Members to the Primate of Poland Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński [1956–1958]*). After the Faculty of Theology was detached from the Jagiellonian University in 1954 and incorporated into the Academy of Catholic Theology in Warsaw, hopes for redressing this injustice were quickly revived among the former Faculty professors.⁸ This was related to the rise to power of Władysław Gomułka's team on the wave of changes of the "Polish October" of 1956. The author analyzes the effort based on a dozen reports presented to Poland's Primate Stefan Wyszyński. Fr. J. Urban sees them as a testimony to the struggle against the communist system, which, after a temporary thaw, systematically stiffened its position towards the Catholic Church in Poland, seeing no possibility of reactivating the Faculty of Theology at a state university.

Thus, the presented collection of studies relating to selected issues of the history of the Theological Faculty of the University of Krakow (from 1818, the Jagiellonian University) contains not only new findings, but also provokes further questions and implementation of the postulates suggested by the researchers, encouraging further scientific discussion in the future.

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8 Cf. also: Barcik, 2000 etc.

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