

100 YEARS OF ANCIENT HISTORY IN THE JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY

In 2022, the Department of Ancient History of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków celebrates the centennial anniversary of its establishment. This joyous occasion inspires one to reminisce about its history. The Department, first established as the Chair of Ancient History on November 1, 1922, was initially headed by Professor Ludwik Piotrowicz. The creation of the Chair, the capstone to a lengthy and complex bureaucratic labor, began in the 1900s and came to fruition in 1922, mainly thanks to efforts of Piotrowicz's mentors, Kazimierz Morawski (professor of classical philology) and Piotr Bieńkowski (professor of archaeology), who studied in Berlin under Theodor Mommsen. Having defended his doctoral dissertation, Piotrowicz acted on Morawski and Bieńkowski's advice and went to study at the Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, where he attended Eduard Meyer's seminars, studied papyrology and epigraphy under Paul Martin Meyer, and completed a habilitation thesis under Otto Hirschfeld's guidance. Professor Piotrowicz went on to develop his papyrological expertise with Pierre Jouguet in Paris.

Piotrowicz' research interests crystallized during his studies in Kraków and Berlin. He published on the Roman Republic (its history and relevant historical sources), Assyria (circumstances of its fall), and Asia Minor (its fall to the Scythian onslaught), having also authored an essay on the genesis of ruler cults in antiquity. Piotrowicz's research in papyrology concerned the status of *toparchoi* and *nomarchoi* in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt. Furthermore, Piotrowicz published on interethnic relations in the European Barbaricum and Roman coin finds in Polish territories; finally, he authored a monumental compendium on Rome's history in Polish (*Dzieje Rzymskie*, Warsaw, 1934).

In 1939, Piotrowicz and his assistant Józef Wolski, imprisoned by German occupants with other Cracovian scholars, remained for some time in an concentration camp; after his release, Piotrowicz ran a charity organisation that helped Cracovians living under the German occupation. After 1945, the indomitable professor continued to head the Chair of Ancient History – despite constant political harassment – until his death in 1957, educating scores of future Polish scholars of ancient history: Józef Wolski, Alojzy Gembala, Tadeusz Zawadzki, Aleksander Krawczuk, Jerzy Linderski, Stefan Skowronek, Andrzej Kunisz and many others. The postwar period saw the reorganization of the University's institutional framework, with the Chair becoming the Department of Ancient History.

Upon Piotrowicz's death in 1957, the position of the head of the Department of Ancient History came to Józef Wolski, who defended a habilitation thesis in 1946 and held professorial tenures at the Universities of Łódź and Wrocław. Wolski took a particular scholarly interest in the history of the ancient Near East, publishing a number of articles on the Arsacid and Seleucid monarchies. Furthermore, Wolski undertook research on

ancient international relationships, studying ties between Classical Athens/Sparta and Persia and those between Rome and ancient Iran. Well-known internationally due to quality of his research, Wolski led the Department of Ancient History until 1980. Among his collaborators and students were Aleksander Krawczuk, Maria Dzielska, Zdzisław Kapera, Maciej Salamon, Lesław Morawiecki, and Edward Dąbrowa.

Between 1980 and 1986, the Department was headed by Aleksander Krawczuk. Although Krawczuk's research interests initially focused on history and literature of the Roman Republic, he devoted the subsequent period of his career to fruitful outreach activities: he untiringly fostered popular knowledge about ancient culture and authored over forty volumes, many of which were translated from Polish into foreign languages.

Between 1986 and 2020, the headship of the Department of Ancient History came to Edward Dąbrowa, a former student of Józef Wolski and Aleksander Krawczuk. Professor Dąbrowa carried out extensive research on ancient Parthia (and its relations with Rome), the Seleucid monarchy, Hellenistic and Roman Judea, and organization of the Roman military and provincial administration in Asia Minor and the Near East. In 1986 also saw the establishment of the Department of Byzantine History, headed by Maciej Salamon. In 2021, both departments merged into the Department of Ancient and Byzantine History, led by Sławomir Sprawski.

The Department of Ancient History commemorated the 75th anniversary of its establishment by publishing the very first volume of *Electrum*; today, the centennial of its establishment is honored through the publication of *Electrum*'s 29th volume.

Sławomir Sprawski

<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6904-5544>
Jagiellonian University in Kraków