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PIOTR LECHOWSKI (ED.): *HISTORIA
BIBLIOTEKI JAGIELLOŃSKIEJ.
TOM II 1775–1918*. [HISTORY OF
THE JAGIELLONIAN LIBRARY.
VOLUME II 1775–1918] KRAKÓW:
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As much as reviews are usually published shortly after the work they discuss has been released in an attempt to present the book to readers, this paper adopts a slightly different approach, since it addresses a book that was published five years ago.¹ While this second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* sets out to present a bibliographical discourse, it can and should be regarded as a milestone in research into the history of Polish libraries. At the same time, it forms part of a research project of many years as the first volume of the monograph dedicated to the history of the Jagiellonian Library was published in 1966², the second one in 2017

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- 1 The theses of this review were actually presented by the author for the first time in a paper delivered during a historical seminar at the National Library in Warsaw on 22 June 2018; it was followed by a lively debate.
 - 2 J. Zathę, A. Lewicka-Kamińska, L. Hajdukiewicz: *Historia Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej. Tom I 1364-1775*, ed. Ignacy Zarębski. Nakładem Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 1966.

reaching only up to the year 1918. It can thus be hoped that this research project will be continued to cover up to modern times. The author of the current review intends that his comments will contribute to shaping the subsequent volumes describing the history of the Kraków Library.

A cursory reading of this second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* inspires respect for both its content and size. Regarding the former, it covers one of the most important cultural institutions in Poland, boasting a rich academic book collection, and with its 600 pages, it can certainly be called extensive. By close observation of the information given in the preliminary pages, it became obvious that this is a work of immense proportions undertaken by a team of several individuals with outstanding scholarly support as part of a 5-year research grant. When attempting a review of such a publication, one has to first ask how to approach it and what should be the objective. It seems to me that a precise substantive and factual analysis of such a book should not be the main approach since it is not possible for a single reviewer, in a way an outsider, to assess the investigation of several individuals working as a team for several years. In view of this, the most important question is how this *History* opens to readers (including a reviewer), and how does it convey its content? It seems to me that from a reader's perspective, it would be appreciated and helpful to get preliminary information about what kind of reading approach to this unique study is acceptable.

Starting with such comments, I would like to confine my reflections to three areas with the first dedicated to the publication and the circumstances of its creation; the second focused on its factual aspect; with the third attempting to answer the question of the audience for whom the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* was written and the objectives of the authors.

Regarding the publication itself, the volume under discussion was published in 2017 and constitutes the second part of the monograph on the history of the Jagiellonian Library. Externally, this item looks like the first volume and the title page, the typeface,

and the list of contents in this volume are in Polish, English, and German compared to Polish, French, and Russian in the first one. The current volume does not have a dust jacket like its predecessor in keeping with other current publishing outputs. The fact that we are dealing with the second part of a multi-volume monograph raises several questions such as why the subsequent volume was released almost 50 years after the first one published in 1966 to celebrate the library's 600 years? Unfortunately, this issue remains unanswered as in the prologue to the second volume, the editor Piotr Lechowski stated that in the 1960s he had the idea to create a multi-volume monograph on the history of the Jagiellonian Library covering the period 1364-1964. After the publication of the first volume, he continues, 'despite quite advanced works and the collection of a part of the sources, the remaining volumes [. . .] were not published' (pp. 20-21)³. In another article from 2014, when describing the research project which actually yielded the second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library*, all Lechowski said was that 'the research undertaken for the purpose [i.e., of publishing subsequent volumes of the history covering other periods], was for various reasons discontinued, not yielding the expected effect'.⁴ Such a comment leaves the readers dangling and having to hazard a guess as to the reasons and circumstances which interrupted the publication of the later volumes in the 1960s. Why was the project abandoned until the second decade of the 21st century and when should the subsequent volumes likely be expected? Lechowski did not mention the latter issue in the prologue, while in the 2014 article, he only wrote that two further volumes - one covering 1918-1945 and the other the period after 1945 - were planned in a 'more dis-

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- 3 K. Frankowicz, M. Galos, Ż. Kubic, B. Kurek, P. Lechowski, U. Perkowski: *Historia Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej. Tom II 1775-1918*, ed. P. Lechowski. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2017. All the quotation pages from the discussed book are given in parentheses in the above text.
 - 4 P. Lechowski: 'Projekt badań „Biblioteka Jagiellońska - opracowanie dziejów od 1775 do 1918 r.”', in: *Studia z dziejów książki, prasy i bibliotek: stan badań za lata 2010-2013*, eds. Z. Kropidłowski, D. Spychała, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego, Bydgoszcz 2014, p. 117.

tant future⁵. In this respect also, more precise information would be appreciated as to whether work on the history of the Kraków Library has been started as yet. Instead, what we learn from the article is that the resumption of the research for the current volume was initiated by several of the library employees which might explain why its authors dedicated it in a friendly gesture to the ‘Employees of the Jagiellonian Library’. Having dealt with the discussion of the external circumstances of the study, it should be also noted that the price of PLN 40-45 is affordable and will certainly allow it to reach a wider group of recipients than if it were much more expensive⁶.

As already stated, the second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* was a part of the research project ‘Jagiellonian Library: a study of its history in 1775-1918’ in 2012-2017 financed by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education within the ‘National Programme of the Development of Humanities’. In particular, it was within the module dedicated to ‘long-term documenting, editorial, and research works of fundamental significance for national heritage and culture’⁷ boasting a budget of PLN 500,000.⁸ Undoubtedly, investigating the history of the Jagiellonian Library fits within the profile of this project’s research objectives and the budget seemed adequate, bearing in mind the 5-year length and that it was a team effort. Acquiring external financing might have also enabled the planning of a more extensive study than was the case of the country providing its own financing. For example, with foreign financing, the possibility might have existed for the pro-

5 Ibidem, p. 119.

6 In the meantime the book (with the exclusion of the prologue, ending, and the bibliography) has been published Open Access on the Repeytorium Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego website: <https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/49580>; <https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/46157> and <https://ruj.uj.edu.pl/xmlui/handle/item/50663> [accessed 14 August 2022]. The uploaded part contains the three main chapters of the monograph.

7 Lechowski, *Projekt badań...*, p. 119.

8 More information on the project at: <https://bj.uj.edu.pl/nauka-i-kultura/projekty/biblioteka-jagiellonska-opracowanie-dziejow-od-1775-do-1918> [accessed 14 August 2022].

ject to have been designed more extensively since specialists from various Kraków cultural and academic institutions cooperated on it. This was one of the issues raised by Lechowski in his article⁹. The research only covered the necessary investigation of the state of research, not an easy question in the case of the Jagiellonian Library, first of all, and this should be most highly appreciated, a roughly comprehensive research in several archives and libraries in Kraków, Warsaw, Wrocław, as well as Lviv and Vienna, though obviously, first of all, in the archives of the Library itself and the Jagiellonian University, as well as in the resources of respective Library units (pp. 23-24).¹⁰

Despite any limitations, the greatest value of this book comes from it being based on a wide variety of sources used for the first time to this extent for documenting the history of the Jagiellonian Library. With this being a reality, one might be tempted to overlook some of the shortcomings related to how the materials, data, and information were processed in terms of the structure and manner of their organization resulting in the final format of the monograph. In addition to this, there is the question of the audience at whom the publication was aimed. This second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library*, together with the summaries in English and German, the bibliography, and the name index, has almost 600 pages which is not surprising given the extensive nature of its coverage. However, the reader cannot help asking how much thought was given to matters concerning the structure, organization, and format of the work. There seem to be no clear instructions for navigating the mass of information collected and presented in the book. Noticeably missing is an indication of how to read or use this item and whether to treat it as a synthesis or more as a collection of the most reliable, authentic, and important information relating to the history and operations of the Jagiellonian Library over the given period. Despite the absence of such

9 Lechowski, *Projekt badań...*, pp. 119-120.

10 Ibidem, pp. 121-124.

a statement, I will attempt to demonstrate that the study actually permits both approaches, with the more appropriate one seeming to be treating it as an enormously rich source of information for finding details about definite topics such as the book collection, employees, and the circulation of materials, among other things.

It should be stated that this somewhat lengthy introduction to the discussion of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* arose from the conviction that certain issues need to be addressed to create a context for its evaluation. The preface to the study written by Piotr Lechowski was very useful in providing information related to the creation of the study. The second point raised with reference to the factual aspects of the study will now be examined. The structure of the book is chronological and similar to that of the first volume. However, the period to be covered was changed in that the first volume was to span the period from the library's establishment in 1364 to 1775 and the second tome from 1775-1964¹¹. Instead, the decision was made for the second volume to reach the end of WW I, while two subsequent ones describing the library's history up to the present time were most likely planned for the future. The beginning of the period covered in the second volume was marked by major reforms in the 1770s, including the activities of Hugo Kołłątaj and the Commission of National Education. As a result of these, the library was allocated a permanent fund for its operations, and the office of the librarian combined with a university professorship was established. Further, the Collegium Maius Library was incorporated into the book collections from other university colleges, based on which the library began to more specifically serve as an all-university library. The break between the first and second volumes of the *History of the Jagiellonian University* was also connected with the employment in June 1775 of the Belgian, Arsenim Teodor Fasseau, who was to begin the process of arrang-

11 See 'Przedmowa', in: Zathey, Lewicka-Kamińska, Hajdukiewicz, *Historia Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej. Tom I...*, p. XII. This in a way contradicts what Lechowski writes (p. 20) about the original project emphasizing that the period 1775-1964 would be described in two separate volumes (see also my remarks on the topic above).

ing and cataloguing the book collection. This was the stated fact accompanied by an unequivocal emphasis on Fasseau's future contribution to 'raising the central academic library' which closes the first volume.¹²

It follows logically that the authors of the second volume should have begun directly with the fact that Fasseau was employed, which they failed to do since it is only on page 50 that this fact is mentioned. We can suppose that it happened this way since the authors of the second volume adopted a slightly different structure for the respective parts. This will be dealt with further on; therefore, the discussion will focus on personal matters by following a general historical outline and the information available on the library compound.

Each of the three major parts of the work under discussion was developed by two authors (Małgorzata Galos and Żaneta Kubic: 1775-1835; Krzysztof Frankowicz and Beata Kurek: 1836-1867; and Piotr Lechowski together with Urszula Perkowska: 1868-1918). Based on what can be gleaned from the prologue, this particular division resulted mainly from the respective terms of office of the library supervisors. This can be deduced from what was mentioned by Lechowski:

'...it was agreed that the decisive role in the process of shaping the institutional development of the Jagiellonian Library was played by its administrators (library prefects, directors). It was to a great degree on their competencies and involvement that the condition, state, and operation of the library depended. In their majority they marked the Library so significantly with their personal touch that the respective periods of their supervision, often of about a dozen or even several dozen years, constituted important stages in the history of that institution.' (p. 22)

It is hard not to agree with such an approach by the editor and the authors since the development and functioning of every institution depend primarily on the thinking of the individuals who work there rather than the information to be found in the legal

12 L. Hajdukiewicz: 'Biblioteka Jagiellońska w latach 1655-1755', in: *ibidem*, p. 425.

acts, statutes, or other such regulations. With respect to the Jagiellonian Library, this statement seems to be very accurate during certain periods, since sometimes only very few people worked there. For example, in the first years under Bandtkie as the head, apart from him, there was only one other staff member employed. On the other hand, it would be worth reflecting on whether such an approach does not excessively limit the possibility of creating a better synthesis which I would like to explore some more in due course. However, what follows is not very clear due to the authors' lack of consistency in presenting information about the different directors, bearing in mind the assumption that it was their personalities that determined the structure of the history of the Jagiellonian Library. My demand is not for an extensive biography of each director, but for a more concise biographical note containing the most important information on a given individual aimed at helping the readers gain a fuller picture of that person's supervision of the institution. This would have been particularly commendable with respect to a well-known individual as Karol Estreicher, and it is with him and also Fryderyk Papée that the authors best demonstrate the usefulness of this approach as at the beginning of the chapters dedicated to each, we come across short and concise biographical notes (p. 294 and pp. 386-387). As for Bandtkie, for example, we learn only a few facts from his life *before* he became the librarian of the Kraków Academy. With respect to other directors, e.g., Józef Muczkowski, Franciszek Stroiński, or Adolf Mułkowski, we will find mostly many dispersed pieces of information contained in the chapter on employees. Here, the authors or editors could have taken more care to maintain a greater balance in the information supplied in the three sections of the volume and which would prove very helpful to readers. Nevertheless, much praise should go to the beautiful, almost all in colour, portraits of the various directors.

From 1775 to 1918, the library had in total eleven directors, administrators, prefects, or inspectors. Thus, the whole volume structure results from the period during which each of them was in office, with each part subsequently divided into smaller chapters cover-

ing the key issues of the functioning of the library, such as its overall administrative and financial situation, its premises, the staff, and obviously the collection - its acquisition, study, cataloguing, and circulation. The part dedicated to Estreicher, additionally, has a chapter called 'Popularization and Science'. The length of the respective chapters most likely resulted from the availability of sources and the information acquired for describing a given phenomenon. While acknowledging the justifiable reasons for using this approach, and being entirely aware of all the potential difficulties, one cannot deny the expectation for the authors to have paid more attention to maintaining a kind of balance between the different parts of the study or the chapters.

My point can be illustrated by the example of the information about the three possibly best-known directors of the Jagiellonian Library in the 19th century - Jerzy Samuel Bandtkie, Karol Estreicher, and Fryderyk Papée. As individuals, the most space was devoted to them with 71 pages devoted to Bandtkie who administered the library for 24 years, and Estreicher, who headed the library for 37 years, received 91 pages, which might be understandable given his number of years. However, the same cannot be said of Papée who ran the library from 1905 until 1926. Owing to the time frame adopted by the authors, only first 13 years of his service could be included in the volume. Nevertheless, this period was allocated as many as 109 pages, even more than Estreicher who served as the director almost three times as long. Similar disproportionate reporting can also be observed in how other matters are covered in some of the chapters. For example, the description of the staff and staff-related questions over the 13 years under Papée amounted to as many as 42 pages, far exceeding similar matters under other directors. This imbalance is glaring given that the book covered the period of many illustrious personalities who made outstanding contributions to Polish librarianship. Examples include such well-known individuals like Józef Korzeniowski, Edward Kuntz, and Józef Grycz employed in the war years as a volunteer. The question arises as to why similar meticulousness was not applied to persons of this stature and to the nam-

ing of all the directors including those who served temporarily. This would be similar to the inclusion of Jan Pindel who was employed by Estreicher in 1903 as an assistant caretaker and worked for the library for 15 years as an assistant guardian and provisional caretaker, among other things. He was mentioned as many as 13 times. Additionally, we find out that the spelling of his name differs in the documents, for example, on page 331, we learn that his name is 'Pindel', while a footnote stated that his name can also be found as 'Pondel', while on page 393 it is the other way around - 'Pondel' is found in the text, while 'Pindel' is in the footnote.

While I am not belittling or disregarding the work of the caretakers, however, in reviewing this second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library*, I wonder whether there are not simply too many pieces of information, such as names, facts, and dates, some of which could have been omitted or more carefully researched before deciding to include them. The case of Pindel or Pondel shows that the authors actually did not make it easier for the reader to decide which was accurate since they had the person's name explained twice in a slightly contradictory way. Similarly, it could be asked whether quoting the whole oath formula of *amanuente* (p. 394) or enumeration of all the 16 points of the contract between the library and the bookbinder, Marcelli Żencykowski, regarding the extent of his work (pp. 229-230) was absolutely necessary. The above-mentioned *amanuente* at the time, despite the need to boast higher education, was a relatively low library rank (after the librarian, custodian, and scribe, just above a trainee). As much as the information on the hierarchy of ranks is interesting to readers, it seems unjustified to repeat it three times within one chapter (pp. 393-394, 406-407, and 416-417). This remains the case even if it reappears in different contexts, that is, once on the occasion of discussing changes in the hierarchy and titles, and again with reference to the library's remuneration scheme. Greater conciseness and a better organization of the information provided would definitely facilitate the readers' use of the second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library*.

Overloading the text with an excessive number of detailed facts is particularly to be seen in the chapters related to the construction works or renovations done to the library premises. In all fairness, the issue of the library premises constituted one of the greatest challenges faced by all its directors included in the second volume of its history. That challenge was finally met only in the 1930s when a new edifice was raised at Mickiewicza Avenue. Earlier, the collection was placed at the Collegium Maius in which subsequently new spaces were taken over until around 1840 when due to Bandtkie's efforts, the library was spread over the entire Collegium Maius' premises. As late as 1907, new rooms were made available in the Nowodworski Collegium nearby for housing the reading rooms, the catalogue, and the offices of the librarians.

A major development in the context of the situation with the premises of the Jagiellonian Library was the renovation conducted in 1839-1877 under Karol Kremer, Hermann Bergmann, and Feliks Księgarski (pp. 176-177 and 300), which adjusted the Collegium Maius to meet the needs of a library and for a reading room to the best possible extent under the circumstances. Although shortly afterwards it proved inadequate since the collection under Estreicher as director kept growing rapidly in the latter half of the 19th century. However, before that happened, it had saved the whole library and the Collegium Maius whose state in the 1830s was deplorable, as can be read from a contemporary description of Józef Mączyński quoted by the authors (p. 174).

The authors based the description of that renovation on the meticulously sought-after archival materials, mainly from the Jagiellonian University's own Archives. These also included sketches and construction plans from the period (e.g., pp. 187 and 195-196). Nonetheless, in the context of the description of all the renovations, one might question if such a detailed accumulation of facts might not have blurred the overall picture of the situation for the readers. For instance, when reading about the fruitless request of Józef Muczkowski, director at the time, to 'intervene with respect to the cracked ceiling in the library office with pieces of lime falling'

(p. 175). Interestingly, this comment was made by Muczowski in his letter to His Excellency Government Commissar at the Scientific Institutes of the Free City of Kraków and its Territory dated 2 January 1838. Including this minor detail about pieces of lime falling in the context of almost 150 years of the institution's history is not really of much relevance to merit providing a separate source for it, all of which does not make it easier for readers to follow the text. A similar observation can be made with respect to the description of the construction works which contains information about preparing a place for storing construction materials. It is stated that 'Kremer needed to gain 'permission to dig out and transfer the trees, gooseberry and other bushes to the botanical garden' (p, 181). Such minor facts seem uninteresting and unimportant to the reader at this time. Although I have no desire to discredit the tremendous amount of work done by the authors in conducting such a detailed archival search, I must raise the issue about the quality of the mass of information included in the book and how it might negatively affect the responses of those reading it.¹³

A further distraction from the quality of the work has to do with errors and a number of inaccuracies in the text. It must be stressed that much credit and appreciation must be given to the authors for producing such an exceptional, extensive, and multi-volume history of the Jagiellonian Library. The source of some of these errors can be identified as coming from previous publications appearing in the academic literature and reported by Lechowski, the editor, in the prologue. One such example was Estreicher's bibliography, published as of 1870, started in the second year of his being director, and whose publication must have been directly

13 See also p. 433 where an extremely detailed description of the above-mentioned reading room created in the Nowodworski College in 1907 can be found. Interestingly, a similar reflection with respect to the first volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* was voiced in the review of St. J. Gruczyński, who critically assessed particularly its first part writing as follows: 'It is of utmost importance for a historical synthesis [. . .] to rationally select detailed facts in view of their relevance for the entity of the presented phenomena and historical processes', see Gruczyński, 'Historia Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 1364-1776', *Kwartalnik Historii Nauki i Techniki*, 1968, 13-3, pp. 679-680.

connected with his work at the library. In the present work, this is mentioned very briefly only once in one paragraph and would seem to be the source of an inaccuracy in the volume under review and might be indicative of how other errors came about. On the second page, a photo of the cover of the first volume of Estreicher's book from 1870 is featured. Regrettably, a small error was made by the authors with this where in one sentence it said that 'in 1875-1908, the Academy of Learning published 20 volumes of the Bibliography', while in the next one they correctly informed the reader that the first volume of the *Polish Bibliography of the 19th Century* was published five years earlier, that is, in 1870 (p. 379). Similarly, the library could not have subscribed to 'Dziennik Lwowski' in 1826 (p. 133), since its first issue was released only in 1867. For such an error, the authors may be partially excused by the fact that this inaccuracy was first given in the *Chronicle of the Library of the Jagiellonian University from 1811* authored by Estreicher, and which the authors give as the source with this fact¹⁴. Another shortcoming exhibited in the work has to do with typographical errors, such as the spelling of the name of the Lviv family of booksellers Wildt ('dt' in the place of 'd', p. 344).

As much as some of the above-mentioned omissions or inaccuracies are excusable, they can unnecessarily confuse the readers. There are challenges faced with a huge publication like this second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library*, which is based on a large number of facts, names, and dates which the authors have to check and organized in a comprehensible manner to facilitate us. Nevertheless, they must be aware of the importance of accuracy so as not to confound the readers. This equally applies to an internal cohesion of the text which in some cases is not reflected as can be seen with reference to the case of the caretaker Pindel. The reader is given the following information on p. 382 where we read that '...in April 1905, after almost 40 years of dedicated work for the

14 K. Estreicher, *Kronika Biblioteki Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego od 1811 roku*, compiled and preface Jan Brzeski, Księgarnia Akademicka 2012, p. 12.

Library, Karol Estreicher finally retired'. This statement comes at the end of the part dedicated to Estreicher. Two pages later, at the beginning of the section dedicated to Papée's directorship, we can learn that '...on 22 March 1905 Karol Estreicher, the previous Director of the Library, retired'. This may have been possibly written by different authors; however, the final editing would be expected to make such information uniform. In the actual record, it is 26 April that is considered the date on which Estreicher ceased being the library's director.¹⁵

Similar inaccuracies appear elsewhere, limiting the readers' ability to rely on what is presented as facts. This can be observed in another case with reference to employing the *amanuent* Kornel Heck, a gymnasium teacher. On p. 317, we read that in 1902, he was assigned to work at the library *ex officio*, against which Estreicher protested for financial reasons. This information was supported by a longer quote from his letter to the Senate of the Jagiellonian University which included the statement, 'The Director's intervention and that of the University authorities proved effective'. 'Heck soon returned to Lviv'. The whole story does seem brief and quickly over. However, it does not appear to be so, since on p. 384 we find information on a competition from January 1905 for the Custodian position and which was participated in by 'Dr. Korneli Heck, gymnasium professor, temporarily employed at the Jagiellonian Library as *amanuent*'. Further, on p. 395, it says that in 1905, Papée 'solved the question of Heck's employment', who then, just as was said 80 pages earlier, returned to working as a teacher, though not to Lviv as before (p. 317), but to the John III Sobieski Gymnasium No. 3 in Kraków (p. 384). It thus seems from all the information given about Heck that he must have worked at the library for a longer time, namely from 1902 to 1905. In view of these contradictions, readers are bound to ask how it was all possible since Es-

15 See J. W. Brzeski, *Środowisko Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej 1775-1939. Słownik biograficzny*. Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2014, p. 55, and J. Baumgart, 'Estreicher Karol Józef Teofil', in: *Słownik pracowników książki polskiej*, ed. I. Treichel, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, Warszawa/Łódź 1972, p. 207.

treicher effectively protested against his employment in 1902, as a result of which 'he soon returned to Lviv'. Going back to p. 317, from where they remember the story and re-reading the relevant fragment, they might also notice in the footnote that Estreicher's letter in which he protested against employing Heck was dated 6 December 1904 (!), is from the time when Heck had been working at the library for two years. The very same footnote also gives other literature related to Heck, trying to clarify everything. As it turns out, having moved from Lviv to Kraków in 1902, Heck worked for the Jagiellonian Library for three years (until 1905), after that he resumed his profession as a teacher, first in Kraków (1905-1907), and afterwards again in Lviv (1908-1911).¹⁶

Even if the differing information on Heck and Estreicher's retirement can be reconciled or explained, this task should have been undertaken either by the authors or editors of the volume¹⁷. From the readers' perspective, reliable and accurate information should come in the text itself, and not be hidden in the footnotes, but given in a transparent, unequivocal manner, and it should be accurate. Were this done, the record would have shown that Heck did not return to Lviv in 1902, while Estreicher could not have retired on two different dates. Even if some contradictions regarding certain facts had arisen directly from the sources, attempts should have been made to harmonize them, whereas in the case of the same bits of information appearing in different chapters, the recommendation is for them to be cross-referenced.

Evaluating a historical text for accuracy and reliability is essential for determining its value to the users and so it was necessary to raise this important point in reviewing the second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library*. This is not denying that the

16 Brzeski, *Środowisko Biblioteki...*, p. 65 or T. Cieślak, 'Heck Korneli Juliusz', in: *Słownik pracowników...*, ed. Treichel, p. 322.

17 Another question is whether an editor in the course of 'regular' editing could spot all inaccuracies of this type. With a similar publication it may be recommendable for the authors of particular parts to read the sections written by other authors.

book presents many interesting and unique pieces of information concerning names, dates, events, and the like from the library's history. This unquestionable richness of the information constitutes the volume's major feature. However, one could risk saying that this feature also is the source of some of the book's greatest shortcomings. It would be going far beyond my competencies to try to define what proportion of the provided information is new with respect to what is already known from the existing literature. I estimate that a large proportion is new and one of the reasons for this is because of the vast archival research conducted by the team of authors. However, as I have tried to demonstrate above, this accumulation of facts can also pose problems for the users who should and do expect the authors to provide them with some useful assistance for navigating the vastness of information provided in the book. In this sense, what is missing is some kind of guideline from the authors as to whether the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* should be read as a collection of facts, and not as a coherent synthesis of the same. If the book is approached as collection of facts, we can overlook the repetitions that appear in the study since instead of a broader narrative it seems more important to describe a definite problem. We can then read and use it differently when seeking specific information on the acquisition of the collection under Bandtkie as director, on employment under Estreicher, or on problems with the premises in about 1910 when Papée headed the library. Also, in this case, an easily understood system of organization would prove very useful, just like the name index at the end of the volume. In order to facilitate readers' interest in consulting the sources for respective pieces of information, it would have been good to place the footnotes at the bottom of the page instead of at the end of a given chapter. Currently, each section features its own footnote numbering (which reveals the fact that the book is comprised of more or less autonomous segments), while the shared final bibliography takes into account all the cited titles.

A feature of particular interest is the numerous illustrations (e.g., cards of the so-called old catalogue, 19th-century order slips,

etc.) and tables or lists together with the illustration list at the end of the book. Finally, in order to better contextualize certain facts or pieces of information, there are two short chapters framing each of the three major sections which are very useful. The first appears at the beginning as a ten-page chapter dedicated to the overall historical situation and the Jagiellonian University ('Kraków and its University'. The other is presented at the end and consists of a brief summary of about five pages. Both of these chapters facilitate the book's use as they focus on the structure of the given part by enumerating successively the most important points, such as the premises, the acquisition of the collection, and their study, among other things. Additionally, the volume features the epilogue authored by the editor and two summaries in English and German. This is different from the first volume where the languages used were French and Russian.

Overall, it would be accurate to claim that the study provides a reliable and complete history of the Jagiellonian Library in the 19th century which was a difficult period for the institution. As mentioned, it provides information on staff-related questions and the situation with the premises, along with the various library operations, such as those connected with the acquisition, location, organization, study, cataloguing, and circulation of the collection which are presented in much detail. Deserving of particular attention are the fragments dealing with the donations to the library because they demonstrate the library's ability to boast to the Polish society about its value as well as to the other partitioning zones, and even from abroad. Obviously, one could identify issues that could have been developed differently, such as the position and importance of the Jagiellonian Library amidst the landscape of Polish libraries during the partitions when, due to Estreicher, the library was more seriously performing the function of the so-called 'Biblioteca Patrii'. Regrettably, we will also find little information on the library's contacts with other libraries in the Austrian partition, and almost none on the relationship with libraries from other parts of Poland at the time. Additionally, we must not

forget that the Jagiellonian Library was the second largest in the whole Austro-Hungarian monarchy yet describing its position and impact also in this respect would likely go beyond the assumptions and framework of the present publication being reviewed.

Nevertheless, it is fascinating to find the numerous curious stories in the study, like Estreicher's determination to retrieve in 1883 a book lent almost a hundred years earlier. The delinquent reader turned out to have been Princess Izabela Czartoryska. Also, the ethnographer and historian Henryk Biegeleisen visibly violated the library's regulations when using the manuscript brought from Kraków to Lviv by writing down a number of comments on it. The director of the Lviv Library, Wojciech Urbański, justly reproached him for so doing, leading to him apologizing extensively to Estreicher. On the other hand, it makes one smile to read the piece of information stating that students were obliged to attend classes as a result of the severe regulations introduced upon the suppression of the November Uprising Kraków. These are but several examples of many of the stories which unquestionably make reading the book more exciting.

The third and final point I would like to make is the question of the intended audience for this work which will also allow me to summarize my comments so far. The question regarding the audience has already been partially answered as it would seem that the study has to do more with a rich collection of information on the functioning of the Kraków Library than with an attempt at a synthesis describing its history in the 19th century. Let me add at this point that the book allows for the latter kind of reading, which is actually very inspiring. However, in view of this, a question should be asked as to whether this is the appropriate and only format for presenting data collected in extensive and thorough research into history, particularly of such institutions as the Jagiellonian Library about which so many other studies have been done. Obviously, writing a synthesis and creating a relatively cohesive narrative is a hard and challenging task. Looking at other publications created in recent years in relation to the anniversaries of libraries,

we can observe that in their case too, they rejected the format of a larger narrative to talk about their history. We can look at the example of the National Ossoliński Institute which released several interesting and attractive publications on its 200th jubilee¹⁸. Similar instances can be found in the books celebrating 200 years of the University of Warsaw Library, the *Chronicle of the Gdansk Library 1596-2016*, or the study dedicated to the Poznan University Library also released in 2017¹⁹. These are a few examples of books published around the same time as the *History of the Jagiellonian University*.

The history of every library is composed of many 'smaller' stories, including its premises, staff, and readers, as well as the collection and catalogues, and its impact as an institution of culture and science. Some issues or aspects seem to require the use of synthesis because they reflect a certain development, or document a given status quo. The description of the state of the library's premises as seen in the second volume of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* is one such example. Almost in every chapter, we can read about the deplorable physical conditions in which the library had to operate and which each subsequent director tried to address. The nature of a library's accommodation determines almost everything connected with the collection, including even the catalogues. The use of the synthesis approach is advantageous for readers as it provides a more comprehensive overview. From the author's perspective, such an approach is directly connected with the need to carry out a preliminary selection of the material available, and to

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- 18 E.g., *Księga darczyńców Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich*, ed. M. Pękalska, Wydawnictwo Ossolineum, Wrocław 2017; *Jubileusze Ossolineum. Antologia tekstów*, eds. M. Pękalska, A. Mitki, Wydawnictwo Ossolineum, Wrocław 2017, and *Skarbiec 200 lat Ossolineum*, selected and compiled by Marta Markowska, Wydawnictwo Ossolineum, Wrocław 2017. Recently also a book has been published as a result of a conference held on that jubilee: *200 lat Ossolineum. Rozprawy i materiały*, ed. M. Dworsatschek, Wydawnictwo Ossolineum, Wrocław 2022.
 - 19 *Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Warszawie 1817-2017: miscellanea*, ed. D. Mazek, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2017; *Kronika Biblioteki Gdańskiej 1596-2016*, eds. A. Baliński, A. Frąckowska, M. Otto, Polska Akademia Nauk Biblioteka Gdańska, Gdańsk 2017, and A. Jazdon, J. Skutecki: *Biblioteka Uniwersytecka w Poznaniu*. Wydawnictwo Miejskie Posenania, Poznań 2017.

choose what to document appropriately since not every detail is of relevance to the institution's development, nor deserves to be included in the final study²⁰. It is recommended that this approach should be considered in the production of the future volumes of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* which are eagerly anticipated.

Translated by Magdalena Iwińska

20 A more reader-friendly location of the multitude of the pieces of information is the only point of criticism formulated in the review of the *History of the Jagiellonian Library* by Janusz Kostecki, who suggests having some of them moved to footnotes. What is more, Kostecki emphasizes that he has limited himself to presenting the book instead of picking on error. See Janusz Kostecki, 'Historia Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej, t. 2. 1775-1918', *Roczniki Biblioteczne*, 2018, 62, pp. 285-289.