

de plusieurs ouvrages anciens, épuisés depuis longtemps, mais toujours utiles. C'est notamment le cas de la grammaire et du dictionnaire de A. J. Maclean, ainsi que de la grammaire de Theodor Nöldeke.

Ces remarques de nature bibliographique n'enlèvent rien à la valeur de la grammaire de Tsereteli, dont la présentation très complète — et pourtant concise (pratiquement en quatre-vingt pages) — de la phonétique, de la morphologie et de la syntaxe rendra de grands services.

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WŁADYSŁAW SMEREKA

MEMORIAL PLAQUE IN HONOUR OF THE REV. PROF. ALEKSY KŁAWEK

In May 1973 a congress of Polish biblical scholars was held at Gniezno and Wągrowiec. Cardinal Karol Wojtyła addressed a letter to the participants, informing with regret that, because of previously scheduled pastoral duties, he was unable to take part in the congress, which was to be marked by two solemn occasions: the unveiling and dedication of a monument to the Rev. Jakub Wujek in front of the church at Wągrowiec, preceded by a similar ceremony at the parish church of the nearby Rogoźno Wielkopolskie, where a memorial plaque was to be laid in honour of one of the greatest Polish biblical scholars, the Rev. Aleksy Klawek. The Metropolitan of Cracow, Chancellor of the oldest theological faculty in Poland and Chairman of the Science Committee of the Polish Episcopate emphasized the merits of the two scholars, who had been so closely connected with the Cracow centre.

The Rev. Jakub Wujek had spent the last years of this life in Cracow, devoting them to work on his Polish translation of the complete text of the Bible, which was eventually brought out in 1599, two years after the great translator's death. Several centuries later, on the 350th anniversary of that publication, in November 1949, the Rev. Aleksy Klawek, then Dean of the Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University, organised special Jakub Wujek jubilee celebrations which culminated in a scholarly session in the magna aula of the University and a service at St. Anne's university church¹. A few years later the Rev. Aleksy Klawek (together with Prof. W. Taszycki and the Rev.

¹ A. Klawek, *Jubileusz Biblii ks. Wujka*, Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny (1950), pp. 7—16.

W. Smereka) initiated a phototypic edition of Wujek's New Testament translation of 1593 to mark the celebrations of the millennium of Christianity in Poland. He intended the project, which was not easy to carry out particularly in those days, not only as a tribute to a great Pole and an excellent biblical scholar but also as a demonstration of the permanence of our spiritual and intellectual tradition through the ages.

Father Klawek always remembered the Great Poland origins that he shared with the Rev. Jakub Wujek; they were almost neighbours, as Father Klawek's native Rogoźno lies only twenty kilometres from Wagrowiec. That memory found beautiful expression in his efforts to bring about the reconstruction of the statue of Wujek in front of the Wagrowiec parish church, which was destroyed by the German invaders. Father Klawek did not live to see his idea materialize, but his friends and pupils continued the endeavours, so that on Sunday, May 27, 1973, the statue of the great 16th century biblical scholar could be solemnly dedicated. The day before, the Poznań Metropolitan, Archbishop A. Baraniak, dedicated a plaque commemorating the Rev. Aleksy Klawek. During the latter ceremony, attended among others by a large group of participants in the congress, a speech was made by the Rev. W. Smereka.

The marble plaque was executed by B. Langman. In the centre there is a bronze medallion showing the bust of the Rev. Aleksy Klawek. Above the medallion is a passage from the Holy Scripture which was the leading motto of the work-filled life of the great scholar: *Qui elucidant me vitam eternam habebunt* (Eccles. 24, 31). The four corners of the plaque are occupied by the following items: upper left-hand corner: the Polish national emblem; upper right-hand corner: an open Bible; lower left-hand corner: the building of the Jan Kazimierz University in Lvov; lower right-hand corner: the building of the Jagiellonian University. It is to be regretted that the published report of the Wagrowiec session commemorating the Rev. Jakub Wujek contains no mention of the earlier ceremony at Rogoźno, which was attended by the same biblical scholars². And yet the two events mutually

² F. Kloniecki, *Kongres biblistów Polski w Wagrowcu 20—27 maja 1973*, *Studia Gnesnensia I* (1975), pp. 303—305.

supplemented each other, spanning the great biblical tradition of Polish culture and Polish theology. A medal was once struck to commemorate that great Pole, Stanisław Konarski. It bore the inscription "Sapere auso". Today the same words could be applied to both the Rev. Jakub Wujek and the Rev. Aleksy Klawek, although they lived in different epochs and were professionally interested in different areas of theology.

Father Klawek started his teaching and research work at the seminary in Gniezno. Later, when he was studying in Germany, and also as a professor at Lvov and Cracow, he took Polish young people under his special protection. He not only shared his knowledge with them but also taught them to love their native country. This patriotic activity became particularly strongly marked in the Poznań region and later during his work among Poles in Germany.

The open Bible in the marble plaque symbolizes the interests and the main area of scholarly work of Father Klawek. He was a scholar of subtle critical mind, an excellent classical and oriental philologist, an eminent propagator of the achievements of theology. He concentrated all these abilities chiefly on biblical studies. Almost sixty years before Vatican II he proclaimed many theses that were later to be included in the constitutions of the Council. He owed his wisdom to natural gifts, an inborn common sense, and in no small degree also his erudition, acquired at the universities of Münster, Munich, Paris and Wrocław. He was courageous and uncompromising where truth was at stake. This became apparent to the fullest extent in the years 1945—1952, a very difficult time for the Theological Faculty of the Jagiellonian University, when he was the Faculty's Dean. He did not fear to oppose all pressure from outside the University; he appealed to his superiors when necessary; he defended what was entrusted to him: Theological Faculty at Cracow, one of the oldest Catholic institutions of teaching and research in the world.

Father Klawek showed uncommon energy in spreading the knowledge of and about the Bible. At the turn of the century the standard of Catholic biblical studies was not very high. Research in philology and study of religion had led some non-Catholic scholars to deny the supernatural character of the books of the

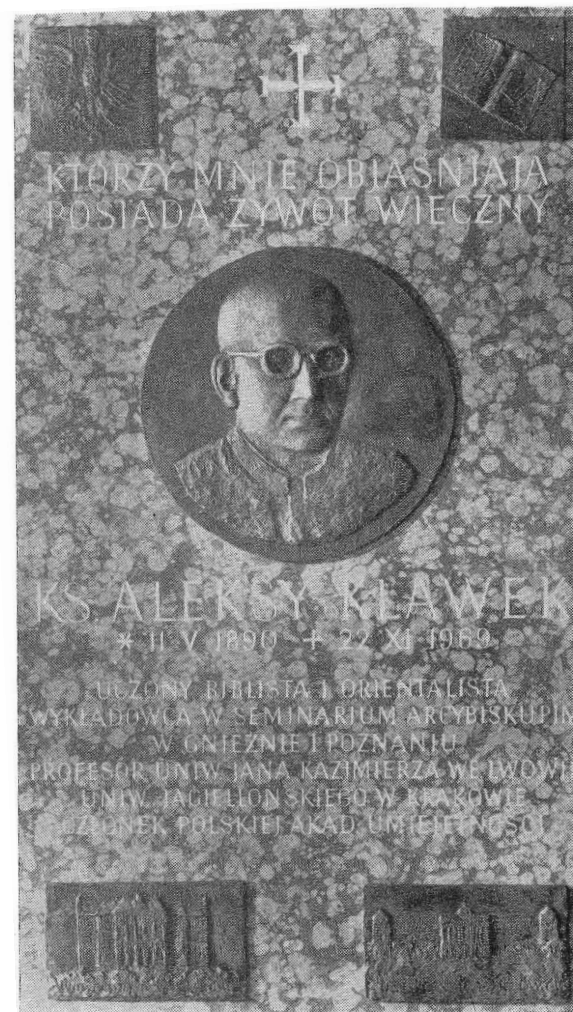
Old Testament, which they came to regard as a collection of naïve stories and legends. The Catholic Church then spoke up to defend the value of the Bible and condemned the theses of the Protestant liberal theology³. Father Klawek's university studies and the first years of his work fell during the time of the Church's defence against modernism. It was after the publication of Father Lagrange's *La méthode historique* (Paris 1903). Father Klawek, as a professor at Lvov, taught and creatively developed a similar method of Old Testament exegesis. His listeners were able to see how many precursory ideas appeared in his lectures. It must have been no small joy to Father Klawek to read the constitution *De divina revelatione*, where he could find so many of the ideas he had expounded in his university lectures.

He really was the pioneer of Polish biblical studies. It is our duty, he used to say, to transmit in our teaching the genuine Word of God, the truth of the Scripture, that is, what the holy writer inspired by the Lord intended to say. In order to understand the ideas of the writers more easily it is necessary to know exactly the literary genre of the sacred books, for their historicity varies depending on the literary genre. The Rev. Aleksy Klawek was outstanding among Polish scholars not only as a biblical scholar but also as a theologian, liturgist and apologist. His creative thought was reflected in the constitutions of the Council. A beautiful tribute to Father Klawek as a teacher was paid by one of his pupils, later the Bishop of Chełmno, who wrote this on the fiftieth anniversary of Father Klawek's ordination: "When we sat at Father Klawek's feet during his lectures at the Poznań seminary forty-three years ago, we admired — already at that time — not only his passion for theology, and especially for biblical exegesis, but also his great fervour and spirit of initiative, and the depth of this spirit as a priest, which has remained in our memory from the first lecture on St. John's Prologue. If some of us, his pupils, have managed to achieve something in the fields of research or pastoral work, we largely owe it to the unforgettable lectures of the celebrator of this jubilee and to his patient methodo-

³ A. Klawek, *Współczesna interpretacja ksiąg Starego Testamentu*, *Ruch Biblijny i Liturgiczny* 22 (1969) p. 188.

logy, which he started sharing with us at his seminar on scriptural exegesis".

The Rev. Aleksy Klawek died in Katowice on November 22, 1969, and was buried in the family vault in the Rogoźno cemetery. Several years later, the present writer, a pupil and one of the closest collaborators of Father Klawek, and Dr Waliszewski, Father Klawek's friend from Rogoźno, placed a bronze bust of Father Klawek on his tomb, in order to mark better the place of his eternal rest. The epitaphs in the Rogoźno church and cemetery testify once again, in reference to the Rev. Aleksy Klawek, to the permanent validity of Horace's *Non omnis moriar*.



Memorial plaque in honour of Rev. Prof. Aleksy Klawek
[Rogoźno (Great Poland), parochial church]