

Zdzisław J. KAPERA

AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON THE BIBLIOGRAPHY
OF POLISH JUDAICA

It is a truism to say that for half a century research on Jewish history and culture in Poland has been neglected or little visible. It was a great achievement of Professor Józef Gierowski, the then rector of the Jagiellonian University, that after several years of enormous efforts, a new center of Jewish research was finally created in Cracow. It received as its premises an appendix to a newly renovated beautiful villa with a spacious garden laid out at the beginning of this century in Batory street (the so-called "Collegium Sanociensis"). In this splendid environment was held the first international symposium on the subject of "The Polish Bibliography of Judaica". The event took place on July 5 to 7, 1988, and it gathered Polish scholars from several universities and research centers and their colleagues from Israeli scholarly institutions.

The meeting was opened by the vice-rector of the Jagiellonian University, prof. J. Wyrozumski, the head of the Jewish Center, prof. J. Gierowski, and prof. Ch. Shmeruk from the Jerusalem University. Prof. Gierowski stressed the creative role of the Jagiellonian University in the establishment of the Center, underlying the financial effort involved, quite exceptional in the present circumstances. However, the role of the Center for the time being will not be to educate new students of Jewish problems, but first of all to stimulate and coordinate research on Jewish population in Poland from the beginning in the early Middle Ages to the Holocaust. In carrying out such research bibliographical tools are necessary. The new center will concentrate on the preparation of a bibliography of Polish publications on the Jewish population in Poland. This task will be undertaken jointly with the relevant centers in Israel. The Cracow symposium was organized to stimulate the cooperation. among the lectures delivered during the three-days meeting were the following: Prof. Chone Shmeruk "Literary output in Yidish in Poland - bibliographical review"; Dr. K. Pilarczyk "Polish Bibliographies of Judaica - methodological remarks, present state of research, postulates"; a series of lectures on the Polish-Jewish press by Dr. A. Cała, Dr. S. Dziński, Dr. Cz. Brzoza, E. Bąkowska, M.A.; Prof. S. Litak "Sources Concerning the History of the Jews in the 18th Century in Church Archives"; Prof. I. Ta-shma "First Hebrew Prints in Poland"; Dr. A. Homecki and Dr. T. Frączyk "Judaica in the Library of the Czartoryski Collection"; Docent J. Samek, Dr. I. Rejduch-Samkova "Problems of the Bibliography of Jewish Art in Poland"; A. Partyka, M.A., Z. Steczowicz-Sajderowa, M.A. "Judaica in the Jagiellonian Library"; Dr. O. Goldbergowa "Jewish Problems in Polish Ethnographical Literature". At the closing section J. Jackowicz-Korczyński, M.A. and Dr. K. Pilarczyk presented "A Project for the Bibliography of Polish Judaica, 1945-1985".

One of the sessions took place in the Czartoryski Library, where a special small exhibition of Judaica had been prepared. Lively discussions were held after all sessions. The symposium can be certainly described as a success.

One thing looks not very clear to the undersigned: why were studies on the Karaims excluded from the bibliographical research? First of all, the University has had a long tradition of Karaim studies (just to mention research by the very well known orientalist, Tadeusz Kowalski (1889-1948)). Next, there is quite a good collection of karaimica in the library of the University's Institute of Oriental Philology. What is more, the studies are still being pursued by some Poles in Poland (like Prof. A. Dubiński from Warsaw University), and abroad (like Dr. S. Szyszman formerly of the old University of S. Batory in Vilno, now editing the Bulletin des Études Karaïtes in Paris). A bibliography of the subject has recently appeared in one of the Polish religiological journals¹.

Notes

¹ Cf. A. Dubiński, Publikacje religioznawcze w zakresie karaimoznawstwa polskiego (od 1918) - bibliografia, Studia Religioznawcze nr 18, Warszawa 1986, pp. 61-76, including English summary: Publications in the Science of Religions on Polish Karaite Studies (since 1918) - a Bibliography, pp. 73-74.

Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich - Wydawnictwo, Wrocław
Oddział w Krakowie.

Objętość ark. wyd. 16,80; ark. druk. 15,25

Zam. 237/90

Drukarnia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w Krakowie