

Szkice z życia Uniwersytetu Jana Kazimierza we Lwowie
Sketches from the life of the Jan Kazimierz University in Lwów

SUMMARY

In the present article I try to characterise the activity of the Jan Kazimierz University (UJK for short) in Lwów and the climate at the University in the 1930s. The study is based on documents (or their copies) stored by my late father Eugeniusz Rybka, a former professor of the UJK. I have perused his notes and diary as well. Quoting public documents and private letters, I present regulations pertinent to the election of rector and prorector, the members of the senate and an advisory body known as the General Assembly of Professors, and to the structure of faculty councils. I sketch the difficult financial situation of the University caused by the national economic crisis at the 1930s. At that time finances of Polish institutions of higher education were based primarily on subsidies from the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Public Education and only occasionally from other sources. Subsidies were allocated on a yearly basis, one academic year at a time. Further I outline the organisation of the academic year, listing documents of selected university and state ceremonies at the UJK. The efforts of the Polish authorities of that time to store personal records at Polish universities in order are emphasised. Other things apart, this became necessary when a new retirement law was introduced stipulating benefits for services rendered in the period of the partition of Poland, provided that the beneficiary did not act against Poland's independence. On the other hand, as Poland regained independence even the acceptance of foreign decorations by Polish citizens was under state supervision. There are interesting UJK documents on relations between the University authorities and employees. Trade unions of lower rank university employees demanded (usually in vain) respect for the employment rights of janitors, laboratory technicians etc. Rights and duties of students were, on the other, well regulated in terms of fees, scholarships for study at home and abroad, practical training, providing even for reduced prices of textbooks. Spite of this it happened that students went on strike. However, the factor that was most adversely affecting the teaching process were anti-Semitic riots. They forced the university administration to introduce the so-called classroom ghetto, i.e. to separate Jews from other students in university classrooms. Just before World War II a new rector was elected at the UJK for the academic year 1939/40. When Lwów was occupied by the Soviet Union in September 1939 the Jan Kazimierz University ceased to exist in its previous form.