

THE PROJECT HAS BEEN CO-FINANCED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

SEMINAR  
KRAKÓW, SEPTEMBER 30, 2016 (FRIDAY) AT 10.00 A.M.

*BRIDGES OF HOPE – Heritage of Dialogue in Kraków*

THOUGHTS OF JAGIEŁŁO, WŁODKOWIC, DECJUSZ AND JOHN PAUL II  
AS AN INSPIRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Klub Jagielloński

Institute of Intercultural Studies of the Jagiellonian University  
in Kraków

BRIDGES OF HOPE – HERITAGE OF DIALOGUE

IN KRAKÓW

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Rzeczpospolita Polska  
Ministerstwo  
Spraw Zagranicznych



## Program

### BRIDGES OF HOPE – HERITAGE OF DIALOGUE

### IN KRAKÓW

### THOUGHTS OF JAGIEŁŁO, WŁODKOWIC, DECJUSZ AND JOHN PAUL II AS AN INSPIRATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

10.00 – 10.15 Professor Leszek Korporowicz – Introduction

10.15 – 10.55 Professor Bogdan Szlachta – Paweł Włodkowiec

11.00 – 11.40 Wojciech Mazur Ph.D. – Władysław II Jagiełło

11.40 – 12.10 lunch

12.10 – 12.50 Danuta Glondys Ph.D. – Decjusz

12.55 – 13.35 Rev. Józef Łucyszyn Ph.D. – JOHN PAUL II

13.35 – 14.35 Annamaria Orla-Bukowska Ph.D. – educational  
tour through the Old Town

Leszek Korporowicz

Institute of Intercultural Studies, Jagiellonian University in Kraków

## BRIDGES OF HOPE. KRAKÓW'S CULTURAL HERITAGE AS ANIMATION OF INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE ON THE EXAMPLE OF 2016 WORLD YOUTH DAY

The modern world is becoming more and more fragmented and competitive. Tension, war and terrorism have become an almost daily experience. The processes of globalization do not unite, but rather further differentiate the society, leading to intermingling, but not enrichment of cultures. Movements of people, cultural patterns and values have mixed these cultures, but this mixing is far from integration, mutual learning and building common development strategies. For these reasons, there is an urgent need to create effective forms of communication, cooperation and dialogue between specific environments, people and organizations over the rivers of conflicts in the real, virtual and spiritual world. In other words, there is a need to build bridges over streams of hostility, alienation and anxiety, between the banks of the lands, communities and ideas. These bridges do not affect their right to existence, but rather prepare to share what is best in them, in the hope that it is possible to discover a community, or at least understanding between creative people who are able to see the meaning of perceiving mutual dignity and support in the difficult art of intercultural dialogue for the benefit of present and future leaders working for the common good.

Building BRIDGES OF HOPE we do not need to reinvent the wheel. Centuries of history of all cultures and peoples show us almost unlimited possibilities of finding people, groups and events that may be an example of dialogue between cultures. These examples may inspire, encourage, and sometimes even instruct us in the continuation of these "best practices", integrated into the realities of the present. An example of the era and the environment which has a multitude of such inspiration are the days of the Jagiellonian dynasty with its central, symbolic center of administration and culture, gathering representatives of many nationalities. Kraków was such a centre in those days. It became a "window on the world" for the whole of Poland, but also a meeting place for ideas, values, religions and visions of humanity manifested in concrete activities, artistic and systematic academic work. The heritage of Krakow, also in later times, may open the imagination to clearly universal values, reaching far forward beyond the local dimension of its history.

An interesting example of inspiration that comes from the creative reading of the cultural heritage of Krakow, are the achievements of Paweł Włodkovic, a great scholar and the rector of the Academy of Krakow from the beginning of the fifteenth century. Increasing multiculturalism and the intensity of intercultural relations are a good reason to rediscover of his thoughts in the context of new challenges that the above phenomena bring.

Firstly, he is the first author in history who has systematically outlined a concept, of *law of nations* referring to natural law.

Secondly, Włodkovic is the author of a pioneering reference to the irreducible principle of respect for dignity of people and communities as an irreducible value in the realm of cultural human rights.

Thirdly, Włodkovic *moves* the principle of respect for the dignity of individuals and communities to the plain of understanding cultural relations of specific nations and even small cultural groups.

Fourthly, he is a pioneer in thinking about *cultural rights* as an aspect of human rights in a community and cross-cultural dimension.

Paweł Włodkovic is the intellectual and spiritual patron of the Jagiellonian Cultural Studies - his legacy is a theoretical background for the project BRIDGES OF HOPE, in which the understanding of culture is closely linked with historical and contemporary problems of man and his relations with others. The model for these relations is dialogue; the challenge are the questions about its actual and practical use in the modern world.

The memory of the canon of the core values of the cultural heritage of Krakow is by no means a historically and procesually closed set. It is to large extent cannon which is still developed, which may serve us as building material but also as a method in the art of building bridges.

The most spectacular example and a symbol of accumulation of such achievements was the World Youth Day, which was held in July 2016 in Kraków. However, it is worth remembering and worth recognizing the roots of this intercultural manifestation of dialogue and the place of its emergence, which dates back to the late Middle Ages.

A creative reading of the cultural heritage of Kraków can be a message, or even a mission to build BRIDGES OF HOPE which can be directed at different parts of the world. They could form a cultural offer and an invitation to join the people who want to be modern builders of those bridges in the area of communication, both on the small, local and international scale as well as the global sphere of cultural relations.

To this end, we would like to invite you to participate in three seminars: the first one entitled "The Heritage of Dialogue of Kraków", aims at presenting specific figures: Władysław Jagiełło, Paweł Włodkovic, Decius and John Paul II, who are perfect examples of animators of intercultural dialogue.

The second seminar entitled "Jagiellonian Inspirations, Creative Applications" aims at a synthetic presentation of processes and the potential of good practices regarding openness to dialogue and other cultures in the creative use of the cultural heritage of Kraków.

The third Seminar will have the nature of an educational debate, inviting to independently develop a program of animation of intercultural dialogue based on the values of Kraków's heritage as a particular research model in specific social environments outside the city.

Bogdan Szlachta

Institute of Political Science and International Relations, Jagiellonian University in Kraków

### PAWEŁ WŁODKOWIC

Paweł Włodkowiec (Paulus Vladimiri) - a professor of canon law, famous mainly for his activity at the Council of Constance (1414-1418), is a person who is definitely worth rediscovering. After all, he was one of the most important canon lawyers of his generation. He was born in the early 1370s, a century after the death of St. Thomas Aquinas and only a few years after the founding of Kraków Studium Generale, the later Kraków Academy by King Casimir the Great (1364). He came from the village Brudzeń in Dobrzyń area; a land which was the subject of a dispute between Polish rulers and the Teutonic Order, donated in fief by Louis I of Hungary to the Duke of Opole Włodzisław, illegally donated by the vassal to the Teutonic Order during the reign of the daughter of Louis, (St.) Jadwiga and her husband Władysław Jagiełło, who renewed the Academy of Kraków in 1400. Paweł did not study in Kraków, but in Prague, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1389 after graduating from the faculty of basic sciences (artes), and four years later he became a master of artes liberales. In Prague he also undertook legal studies and graduated in 1396, receiving the degree of bachelor of canon law (decrees). After ordination, Paweł in 1398 became a scholastic in Poznań, and two years later a canon of Płock. In 1403 or 1404 he undertook graduate studies in law at the University of Padua (perhaps on the advice of the bishop of Krakow Piotr Wysz, a graduate of the same university, and even its former rector), where he attended, among others, the lectures of the later Florentine cardinal, Francisco Zabarella. There, in 1408 he earned a bachelor's degree in decrees (i.e. canon law). Having already been a visitor in Roman Curia and he collaborated with the Dean Piotr of Kobylin (prosecutor of the Polish king in "the Teutonic case"). The following year he took part in the deliberations of the Council of Pisa (launched in March 1409); in Bologna, where the deliberations of the council were transferred, he submitted a statement of Samogitians to Pope Alexander V (d. May 3, 1410), and then returned to Poland. By the end of 1411 he assumed the function of curator and Canon of Kraków (probably in the same year he received the degree of Doctor of Decrees in Kraków). In 1412, together with Andrzej Łaskarz, with whom he studied in Prague and Padua, and who then received the position of Bishop of Poznań, as a representative of Prince Janusz Mazowiecki he participated in Buda in the proceedings before Sigismund of Luxembourg as a mediator in the dispute between Poland and Teutonic Knights. In 1414 and 1415 Paweł served as rector of the Academy of Krakow, but at the end of 1414 he went to Constance, where - along with other Polish envoys - he stayed until the end of the session the council, i.e. until 1418. During his stay in Constance Włodkowiec wrote three works, *Saevientibus*, the treaty *Opinio Ostiensis* and the equally important *Ad*

*Aperiendam*. After returning to Kraków Paweł in 1418 became the vice-rector of the Academy; in connection with other peacekeeping activities of Sigismund of Luxemburg in the Polish-Teutonic dispute he prepared comments on the rights of Poland (Oculi) and was present on January 6th, 1420 at the announcement of the decision, from which Jagiełło appealed to the Pope. In connection with this appeal, Włodkovic was again sent to the Pope as one of the ambassadors of the Polish king and prepared the exposition of the legal position created to the Papal committee headed by Cardinal Guillermo Filiastri. In 1432 he was in Padua, from where he wrote a long letter about the case of Teutonic Knights to his superior, Bishop of Kraków, Zbigniew Oleśnicki. Three years later, at the end of the year 1435, Paweł Włodkovic died in Kraków.

Ludwig Ehrlich, editor of the three-volume multi-lingual edition of Włodkovic's writings of 1968 argued that in writings on the Polish-Teutonic dispute in his Constance times, Włodkovic used methods of doctrinal discussion rather than court discussion: he focused on setting standards based on general principles, "recognized in natural light of the intellect", and not on an examination of particular facts by investigation, proving his case with aid of witnesses, who know facts based on observations made using their senses.

*However, one should emphasise, as the twentieth-century researcher of Włodkovic does, that the purpose of that [he] wanted to achieve was respect for men and peaceful, orderly life of the international community, and his reasoning was based on assumptions that were legally accurate.* It is worth noting that Ehrlich, in the era of so-called "People's Republic of Poland" seems to claim that the existing, current, law (present already in the fifteenth century) stipulated a foundation for the "respect for men" and "peaceful, orderly life of the international community", even though this foundation was practice underestimated and considered to be non-existent and not binding. Not using analogies that are easy to identify even in present times, it is worth noting that Ehrlich's introductory text opens a question whether *human dignity is to be respected irrespective of religion*. This question remains, after all, up to date in relation to the practice of our times: the legal reflection of the times of the Council of Constance and in our times still directs our attention to the foundations, to the already existing, valid and current law. This law leads us to reflection not so much on human rights but rather to its possible foundation, which is dignity, perhaps even the inherent human dignity of every human being, regardless of their involvement not only in religious matters (related to their confession) but also ethno-cultural, sex or class issues.

## WŁADYSŁAW II JAGIEŁŁO

Although almost all rulers of late medieval Europe can be seen in the context of intercultural contacts and interactions, Władysław Jagiełło, the Grand Duke of Lithuania and the king of Poland seems to be almost an emblematic figure for these processes. Born at the crossroads of cultures, the son of Duke Algirdas Gediminids, who, as Ruthenian chronicles claim "was very wise and spoke multiple languages" and Tver Princess Juliana, he was brought up in the Lithuanian and Ruthenian traditions. Already in his youth there were scholars of Graeco-Byzantine origin in his immediate circle. When in 1386 he assumed the throne of Kraków, alongside his twenty years younger wife - Queen Jadwiga, he came in wide contact with Latin culture of Christian Europe. It is doubtful whether he ever fully assumed this culture as his own - as to the end of his life he remained faithful to the tastes learned from the family home, for example, the Gothic churches he funded Byzantine-Ruthenian paintings. However, he tried to understand and support the world of his new subjects.

In this short presentation it is not possible even to list all the measures and activities taken by the king Władysław. We will therefore limit ourselves to a few examples relating to the political and cultural center of the Jagiellonian state - i.e., Kraków. At the end of the fourteenth century the city was a center of multinational character, inhabited by people of Polish, but also German, Jewish and Hungarian origin. Kraków was a crossroads of trade routes running from west to east and from south to north. This meant temporary presence of numerous visiting merchants. The privilege dating from the beginning of the reign of Jagiełło mentioned the inhabitants of Toruń, "Prussians", Hungarians, Moravians, Czechs and Silesians. Kraków's Merchants, in turn, were much interested in contacts with Russia and Moldova in the east and Nuremberg in the west. Besides people and goods also ideas were passed along the trade routes, and the whole of this exchange formed part of a broad background of intercultural contacts.

But the element that distinguished Krakow of Jagiellonian days from other similar European urban centers, Was definitely the university, renewed thanks to the efforts of the monarch. It was a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural melting pot - the center of intellectual life, which at that time enjoyed a great reputation not only on the lands of the Jagiellonian monarchy, but also in Silesia, Pomerania or Russia, and soon also in Germany, the Czech Republic and Hungary. The innovative interpretations of the idea of a just war echoed loudly throughout Europe. They were formulated by the first rector of the renewed University, Stanisław of Skalbmierz, or his successor Paweł Włodkowic, who presented them at the Council of Constance in the treaty "On the Authority of the Pope and the

Emperor against the Infidels". Also studies in mathematics and natural sciences slowly gained importance - a special development of these disciplines happened already after the death of Jagiełło, in the second half of the century.

Of course, the reality of intercultural contacts in Kraków was not always idyllic. There were frequent conflicts between the Christian and Jewish population, characteristic for the whole of Europe at the time. Tensions, clearly visible already in the fourteenth century, have resulted in bloody incidents only in the next century, during the reign of Władysław Jagiełło. In 1407 in the tumult caused by suspicions of a ritual murder of a Christian child and sacrilege, a crowd of angry residents raided the Jewish quarter, killing and burning. Anti-Jewish incidents also occurred several times in the following decades. Less spectacular, but more frequent disagreements also appeared among university students. The object of verbal and sometimes even physical assaults were often Germans or Masurians, ridiculed because of their characteristic way of speaking; Hungarians were particularly rowdy as in Kraków they cultivated their customs generally considered too violent by most.

Not all of these trends and processes should be linked directly with the person of the monarch. Undoubtedly, however, the reign of the ruler of Lithuanian-Russian origin created not only background for them, but also functioned as a catalyst, accelerating changes.

Danuta Glondys

Villa Decius Association

## JUSTUS LUDWIK DECJUS IN RENAISSANCE KRAKÓW

For all Poles Krakow is a city with a very distinct identity, the cradle of Polishness, historic seat of kings and bishops a strong academic and creative centre. It existed on the political map of Europe from the eleventh century to the end of the eighteenth century as the most important political, spiritual and academic center of in the Polish Kingdom.

Kraków was the meeting place and refuge for peoples, cultures and religions, an open and tolerant city. As once Rafael Scharf said, the only city in the world where Corpus Christi Street intersects with Rabi Meisels' and St. Sebastian's with Berek Joselewicz's. Being the seat of Catholic Bishops, the city gave shelter to both Jews driven out of other European states and Protestants seeking safety - just like Justus Decius of Alsatian origin. Ukrainians, Czechs, Hungarians, Germans and Italians came to Kraków, bringing their culture, history and the ability to share them with the locals and enjoy the freedom of religious practice.

Kraków, welcoming "foreigners", owed a lot to them. "Czechs gave it Catholicism, Germans - location law, Italians - architects, Swedes - King Sigismund III, Jews - all their tradition, Austrians - cafes and forts"<sup>1</sup>. Decius left not only historic treaties, gold ducats, or a beautiful Renaissance villa but also a network of Polish friends across Renaissance Europe.

Jost Ludwig Dietz was born around the year 1485 as the son of Jacob, mayor of Wissembourg. At the age of fifteen he left Alsace and settled in Moravia, where he became a merchant and was involved in mining and monetary affairs. In 1507 he was in Tyrol, which he left for Hungary and then, at the turn of 1507-1508, he came to Kraków, where he latinised his name and as Justus Ludwig Decius inscribed it in the history of the city and Poland.

He began his career in Krakow as a protege and collaborator of Jakub Boner, a royal banker, founder and manager of the salt mines of Wieliczka and Bochnia. For him Decius took many trips abroad, was involved in matchmaking for King Sigismund I and the preparation of his wedding with Princess Bona. In 1520 with the support of Bishop Piotr Tomicki he became secretary of King Sigismund the Old. As a royal diplomat he went to Italy to inform the Pope about the birth of Sigismund Augustus and to receive seal the crown from Erazm Ciołek. On the way back in 1522 he visited Martin Luther in Wittenberg and Erasmus of Rotterdam, whose friendship and respect he enjoyed for a lifetime.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Mikos, *Kraków 2000*, Kraków 1995, p. 5.

He was a true Renaissance man of many talents - a diplomat, historian and economist. His most important historical works include the description of the preparations for the wedding of King Sigismund I and Princess Bona and the three-volume treatise, which connects the oldest history of Poland with early history of the peoples of Europe. His work, as well as his extensive correspondence with Prince Albrecht and Erasmus of Rotterdam (including the letter with a description of the victory in Olszanica by Prince Constantine Ostrogski over the Tartars) bears witness to the history and culture of Poland of his day.

In 1525, he became adviser to the king in economic matters and overseer of crown mints in Kraków and Torun and Prussian mints in Königsberg. A year later, he presented a treatise on the minting of coinage, which proposed the removal from circulation of foreign and false coins and the introduction of a single coin in the whole country.

He was an art collector and patron of scholars, whom he generously endowed. He was involved in plenty of charitable and social activities as councilor of Krakow and prefect of Piotrków. He supervised, among others, the renovation of the higher tower of St Mary's Church.

Justus Decius came to Krakow from Alsace engulfed in riots, unknown to anyone, alien both culturally and religiously. For many years he served in the Boner family, revealing his talents and expanding his knowledge. His career ended as a royal dignitary and advisor, an excellent diplomat, manager of the biggest commercial empire in contemporary Europe - the salt mines of Wieliczka and Bochnia and owner of several mines. He was a writer and editor, author of valuable historical and economic treatises, a man of great mind, respected in Kraków and outside the borders of the country. He was able to gain favour of both councilors of Kraków and the Habsburg court. Thanks to him the golden Renaissance Poland had its own gold coin, a symbol of wealth and glory, and loyal friends in Europe. Polish achievements in the sixteenth century in the political and economic sphere were made possible thanks to people which created them, their attitudes, talent and dedication and thanks to encounters with other cultures, which were inscribed into the culture and everyday life of Renaissance Europe.

Article based on: A. Borowski, *Duch Willi Decjusza*, [unpublished], Kraków 2000; W. Pocięcha, *Decjusz Jost Ludwik*, [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 5, Kraków 1939-1945, p. 42-45; K. Trojanowska „Wiadomości Willi Decjusza” 2008.

## INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN THE REFLECTION OF JOHN PAUL II

In today's world, encompassed by a variety of networks of modern methods of communication, the universal value of dialogue as an effective means of communication between people is still standing strong. Doubtlessly, one could find many representatives of the art of fruitful dialogue, but a special place among them belongs to a priest, philosopher, theologian, Pope - St. John Paul II, who was rooted in tradition, culture and academic life of his people, country and region. He was a man of deep faith, priest, poet, actor, statesman, considered by many a mystic, a man remarkable and simple at the same time, humbly listening to others and speaking powerfully, of a strong identity, but open to others - a tireless advocate of dialogue. These are just some of the features of the Great Pole, who throughout his life showed that the most important value is man is endowed by God with a special and unique dignity. One of the manifestations of this special endowment is the ability and the need to communicate with others. This personalistic dimension to the teaching of John Paul II may be observed in his highlighting the need for dialogue not only as a tool, but primarily as a mode of being together with others.

With the recognition of personalistic values, emphasis on the importance of the attitude of solidarity and defiance and appreciation of the importance of dialogue, it is possible to form dignified relations through participation, which is an important social fact. Dialogue, in fact, takes place in such important areas of social life as culture, religion or politics. Dialogue is a method that promotes participation. The effectiveness of the dialogue, however, as a way of communication implies the need for meetings and openness. It allows to build bridges to facilitate mutual cooperation and, above all, to avoid conflicts and achieve social balance - social peace. In a diverse society, mutual relationships constantly force intercultural dialogue in the search for a compromise.

John Paul II, having experienced dialogue present in the Jagiellonian Republic and among his great predecessors, knew that dialogue opens new perspectives for understanding and improving the quality of coexistence in the same area of diverse societies. In his preaching he referred to the example of a heterogeneous population of the Republic of Poland of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, where through difficult dialogue and compromise agreement was reached as well as peace and true tolerance for religious, cultural and national diversity.

Eastern and Central Europe has a cultural foundation for dialogue that builds the future of a heterogeneous Europe based on strong open identity and responsible participation giving dynamic to civil society which may see justification for the principle of tolerance in the pragmatism of the

experience of past eras. Dialogue corresponds to human nature and dignity of people, being a necessary condition for self-fulfillment of man. True dialogue implies an attitude of openness to the truth, readiness and willingness to understand a partner of dialogue as he understands himself. In the atmosphere of dialogue, mutual trust and humility, gentleness, prudence and clarity are necessary in the formulation of judgments, and above all - love.

Openness to qualitatively new challenges is a special feature of European dialogue of cultures, which the Pope has consistently emphasized. This concerned the existing political, religious and economic divisions on the European continent. Christianity in Europe has for centuries given a sense of unity among various nations while preserving their diversity and respect for their identity. The Gospel teaches, after all, openness and respect for each other. John Paul II appreciated the commitment to interreligious dialogue of the representatives of different nations and churches on the realm of values essential to humans, humanity, and even whole civilizations. He saw the search for understanding and agreement a concern for open civilization, which he often called the "civilization of love".

Interreligious dialogue is most fruitful when it emerges from the experience of "living together" every day, in the same environment and culture, and as used and understood as a method and means of mutual knowledge and enrichment. Dialogue aims at getting to know different cultures, distinguishing their positive and negative aspects, adopting their authentic human values and in the development of measures that will allow it to communicate faith in a way more understandable to people of a particular culture. However, it is true that the Gospel can not be identified with culture because it transcends all cultures.

The dialogue between the Gospel and contemporary society is conducted even today in the reality of the Church, in an atmosphere of different cultural traditions among the elements that constitute the values of a given culture. The aim of this dialogue is, however, focusing mainly on relation towards the human person, their freedom and dignity and a sense of responsibility and openness to transcendence.

In meetings with the faithful representing different religious, social and political experiences, as well as having their historical distinctiveness, the Pope gave examples of unity that brought peace, freedom and experience of dignity. Many times in his teaching John Paul II invoked the allegory of the "two lungs" of culture and heritage of Europe, East and West, with which the Church and the new Europe must learn to fully breathe. An important element of thus understood civilization as conceived was, according to the Pope the need to restore and universalise the values that used to build spiritual unity of European civilization. It is precisely dialogue which should lead to the community of spirit growing from the Christian roots of Europe.

Christian identity can be lived and passed down in dialogue with other religions. However, first one must recognize the universality of the salvation that God gives and respect it in otherness of people. Christian identity understood in such a way will not suffer in the process. It becomes an identity capable of dialogue, open and tolerant. John Paul II saw in these values a natural consequence of life by the truths of the Gospel. A person of open identity recognizes that the fundamental and inalienable human right is the right to preserve one's own identity. The Polish Pope confidently preached that the ethnic and national minorities living in any country have the right to maintain their own identity and should not be discriminated against in any way.

Pope John Paul II during his pilgrimages and in various situations mentioned the importance of dialogue in organizing social life. He spoke of universal human rights, which are significantly related to the nature of the person and indicate a "universal and inalienable requirements of the universal moral law." In his speech at the UN he referred to the nature of the moral order of law related with nature of the person, reminding that "We do not live in an irrational and meaningless world, but in a world where there is a moral logic which is built into human life and which makes possible dialogue between individuals and peoples. If we want the age of coercion to give way to an age of persuasion, we must learn to talk about the future in language understood by all people."

In today's world the culture of dialogue, especially intercultural, is disappearing. The European Union has not developed its own concept of multiculturalism yet, but instead still refers to the ineffective trends of *multi-kulti*. We definitely lack certain ethos, a new attitude and a new vision of intercultural dialogue. This requires not so much clarifying this idea, but the practice of life based on values. Globalized societies should work on and develop their ethos of intercultural dialogue. It should be similar to the ethos of borderlands, ethos of heterogeneous and multicultural societies.

Annamaria Orla-Bukowska

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## BRIDGING MULTICULTURALISM IN KRAKÓW

In a world that is globalizing (increasingly and more rapidly) human beings are daily coming into contact (albeit often electronically) with other human beings from all the continents and from a broad range of “cultures” (in every sense of this word). Hence we are wont to think of cultural pluralism and diversity as a 21<sup>st</sup> century invention, a brand new phenomenon.

Yet nothing could be farther from the truth: no society can ever be an ideal monoculture. Even an apparently homogenous group encompasses the old and the young, men and women, the more and the less educated, upper and lower classes, etc. Therefore exposure to cultural diversity has, in fact, always been part and parcel of human life. People have been living in multireligious, multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural communities since time immemorial. And this will continue to be the case into the future.

Quite naturally, it is urban metropolises – especially those that are also university towns – which (in first order) will attract temporary as well as permanent “immigrants.” In some periods there will be official policies encouraging cultural pluralism; in others social customs will promote the presence of various ethnic, religious, and other types of cultures and subcultures.

To better visualize this in practice, we will walk through a part of Kraków, investigating the mechanisms which have created and enabled coexistence in the past as well as in the present. Considered will be the theory as well as the actual experiencing of various levels of cultural diversity. The transforming contexts for cultural bridges in Poland – historically and as the result of the post-1989 changes – will also be taken into account.