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## Leonard Coxe and the Erasmian Circles in Poland

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**Leonard Coxe and the Erasmian Circles in Poland**

Leonard Coxe i erazmiańskie kręgi w Polsce

Леонард Кокс и эразмианские круги в Польше

Peregrinations with the aim of acquiring knowledge of the world and science were characteristic of the Renaissance era. The slogan read: *Peregrinato sit melioris otii magistra, civilium morum consiliatrix, vere sapientiae procreatrix* [...].<sup>1</sup> These humanistic journeys abroad were as K. Hartleb<sup>2</sup> described, „the true source of knowledge and the best way of acquiring comprehensive knowledge, the school of political and social life in other words — the sure and unfailing means of multiplying cultural resources”. Peregrinations were supposed to serve the development of three factors: *prudentiae, scientiae, morum*, and were the necessary element of humanistic education.

The peregrinations of Poles to Italy, the Netherlands, German and Swiss countries, France or Bohemia, during the Renaissance era, as well as their relations with Erasmus of Rotterdam and other outstanding representatives of humanistic learning are relatively well known. Numerous studies on this subject rather comprehensively explained to which centres in the West Poles mainly travelled, where they studied and even

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<sup>1</sup> K. Hartleb: *Polskie dzienniki podróży w XVI w. jako źródło do współczesnej kultury* (*Polish Diaries of the XVIth Century as a Historical Source*), Lwów 1920, p. 11; S. Kot: *Polska złotego wieku wobec kultury zachodniej* (*Poland of the Golden Age and the Western Civilization*) [in:] *Kultura staropolska*, Kraków 1932.

<sup>2</sup> Hartleb: *op. cit.*, p. 13.

how many of them. We are much less informed about the influence of the Polish scholars and their scientific works on Western Europe.<sup>3</sup>

The less known aspects of the above mentioned problem are cultural relations between Poland and England, the knowledge of which does not exceed the information contained in the introductory works by S. Kot<sup>4</sup>, W. Borowy<sup>5</sup>, or U. Szumska<sup>6</sup>.

The vicissitudes of Leonard Coxe, an English humanist, may serve as an interesting example of humanistic peregrinations and at the same time they are an important contribution to the cultural relations between Poland and England in the Renaissance era. The up to date state of the research on him, also proves the unsatisfactory knowledge of Polish-English relations in that time. The very few remarks about this humanist, which are to be found in the works of English historians, are full of mistakes, contain obscure passages and besides, completely ignore his connections with Poland. So therefore, the biographer of Erasmus of Rotterdam would be partially right, when he wrote that Coxe became more eminent in foreign countries than at home<sup>7</sup>, if not the fact that as well in the English historiography as in foreign studies concerning the Renaissance era Leonard Coxe is not mentioned as a rule. In Polish literature little attention was payed to this English Erasmian with the

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<sup>3</sup> For the general background of Polish history in the first half of the XVIth century see: A. Gieysztor, S. Kieniewicz, E. Rostworowski, J. Tazbir, H. Wereszycki: *History of Poland*, Warszawa 1968; *The Cambridge History of Poland to 1696*, Cambridge 1950; *Poland the Land of Copernicus*, Wrocław 1973; C. Miłosz: *The History of Polish Literature*, London 1969; *Polska w epoce Odrodzenia (Poland in the Age of Renaissance)*, ed. A. Wyczański, Warszawa 1970; Z. Wojciechowski: *Zygmunt Stary (King Sigismund the Old)*, Warszawa 1946.

<sup>4</sup> S. Kot: *Anglo-polonica. Angielskie źródła rękopiśmienne do dziejów stosunków kulturalnych Polski z Anglią (English Manuscript Sources for the Cultural Relations between Poland and England)*, „Nauka Polska”, vol. 20, Warszawa 1935.

<sup>5</sup> W. Borowy: *Anglo-polonica. Wiadomości o nieukończonyj pracy i zniszczonych materiałach (Information about an Unfinished Work and Lost Materials)*, „Sprawozdania Towarzystwa Naukowego Warszawskiego”, Wydział II, 1946. See also W. Borowy: *Studia i rozprawy (Studies and Articles)*, vol. 2, Wrocław 1952, pp. 360—371, where his numerous articles on Anglo-Polish relations are listed.

<sup>6</sup> U. Szumska: *Anglia a Polska w epoce Humanizmu i Reformacji (England and Poland in the Age of Humanism and Reformation)*, Lwów 1938. See also J. Jasnowski: *England and Poland in the XVIth and XVIIth Centuries*, Oxford 1948, and H. Zins: *Anglia i Anglicy wobec Polski w XIV—XVI w. (England and the English towards Poland in the XIVth—XVIth Centuries)*, Warszawa 1974. For the impact of Copernicus upon England see H. Zins: *Mikołaj Kopernik w angielskiej kulturze umysłowej epoki Szeźspira (Copernicus in the English Intellectual Culture in Shakespeare's Epoch)*, Wrocław 1972.

<sup>7</sup> C. W. Knight: *Life of Erasmus*, p. 229.

exception of the above mentioned book by U. Szumska and the works of H. Barycz and the paper in the *Polish National Biography* by S. Kot<sup>8</sup>. Though, a closer acquaintance with his life and activities shows the important role that Coxe played in English and Polish cultural life in the Renaissance era and his connections with Erasmus of Rotterdam, with Melancthon and a wide circle of the most outstanding Polish Erasmians and prominent persons at the court of King Sigismund I as well as with the people grouped around Thomas Cromwell. As early as in the middle of the XVIth century John Leland, a well known English collector of antiquities and chronicler, in his little known panegyric praised Leonard Coxe's merits<sup>9</sup>:

*Inclyta Sarmaticae Cracovia gloria gentis  
Virtutes novit, Coxe diserte, tuas.  
Novit et eloquii phoenix utriusque Melancthon,  
Quam te Phoebus amet, pleriusque chorus,  
Praga tuas cecinit, cecinitque Lutetia laudes,  
Urbs erga doctos officiosa viros.  
Talia quum constant, genetrix tua propria debet  
Anglia te simili concelebrare modo.  
Et faciet, nam me cantantem nuper adorta,  
Hoc ipsum jussit significare tibi.*

This paper attempts to reconstruct Leonard Coxe's biography to 1527 and to evaluate his ties with Poland. It is also an announcement of a wider study on Polish-English relations in the Renaissance era, now in preparation.

Leonard Coxe's surname is spelled, in historical sources, in different ways, as Cox, Coxe, Cockes, Cokkes. Usually this name was spelled Cox or Coxe. The latter form was used in Henry VIII charter of 10.II.1541 which appointed this English humanist a headmaster in Reading.<sup>10</sup> In the first edition of his rhetorics he is called Cox, but in the second Cockes.<sup>11</sup> Leland's panegyric takes the form of Coxe, which prevails in Polish historical literature, while in the English the form Cox is most commonly used.

Leonard Coxe was the son of Laurence Coxe of Monmouth and Elizabeth Willey.<sup>12</sup> He was born in Thame, Oxfordshire, most probably at the

<sup>8</sup> S. Kot: *Coxe Leonard* [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny (Polish National Biography)*, vol. 4, 1938, pp. 98—99. See also H. Barycz: *Z epoki renesansu, reformacji i baroku (In the Age of Renaissance, Reformation and Baroque)*, Warszawa 1971, pp. 10—17.

<sup>9</sup> J. Leland: *Encomia illustrium virorum* [in:] *Joannis Lelandi antiquarii de rebus Britannicis collectanea*, vol. 5, London 1774, p. 118.

<sup>10</sup> *Public Record Office in London*, Pat. 32: Henry VIII, pt. 5, m. 7.

<sup>11</sup> L. Coxe: *The Arte or Crafte of Rhethoryke*, ed. P. I. Carpenter, Chicago 1899.

<sup>12</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 4, Oxford 1960, p. 1336.

very end of the XVth century, but exact date of his birth is unknown. One can only assume, that when he arrived in Poland in 1518 he was a young man of about twenty, who had graduated from Cambridge and had spent a short period in Paris and Tübingen. We know nothing about his school years, anyway the suggestion made by A. F. Leach<sup>13</sup>, a known researcher of the history of English education, that Coxe studied at Eton is unfounded. The analysis of the historical sources concerning this famous school made one reject this supposition. The records of Eton pupils indicate that Richard Coxe was one of them.<sup>14</sup>

The question of Coxe's studies at Cambridge also is not clear enough. The first remark about this is dated 12.II.1530, when Coxe entered Oxford University for incorporation and for M. A. and for dispensation as being schoolmaster at Reading.<sup>15</sup> The student register at Cambridge does not contain precise information and notes only that Coxe graduated B. A. at Cambridge (not recorded).<sup>16</sup> So, two versions seem possible: either Coxe studied at Cambridge before he left for Poland or he completed his studies there immediately after his return from Cracow between 1527—1530. The publisher of Coxe's treatise on rhetorics F. I. Carpenter accepts the hypothesis, that Coxe must have obtained his diploma at Cambridge before he left for Cracow, "because without having completed university studies, even in the days of the initial stage of progress in science, he would be unable to hold the positions which he held in Poland in 1518 and next in 1524" and he would not be able to publish the works which he did at the time.<sup>17</sup> This assumption has some justification, though it should be pointed out that in the historical sources of the University of Cracow Coxe is mentioned exclusively as a poet and during his stay in Poland he never revealed his university degree. The Polish university register recorded only: *Leonardus Coxus, Anglicus poeta laureatus de Tama dioc. Linconiensis*<sup>18</sup> and according to the opinion of H. Barycz the English humanist did not hold a university degree at that time.<sup>19</sup>

It seems that Coxe might have partially completed his studies at Cam-

<sup>13</sup> A. F. Leach: *The Schools of Medieval England*, London 1915, p. 311.

<sup>14</sup> *The Eton College Register 1441—1698*, Eton 1943, p. 89; H. C. M. Lyte: *A History of Eton College 1440—1475*, London 1875, p. 113f.

<sup>15</sup> *Register of the University of Oxford*, ed. C. B. Boase, vol. 1, Oxford 1885, p. 159.

<sup>16</sup> *Alumni Cantabrigiensis*, ed. J. Venn and J. A. Venn, vol. 1, Cambridge 1922, p. 409.

<sup>17</sup> L. Coxe: *The Arte or Crafte of Rhethoryke*, p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> *Album studiosorum Universitatis Cracoviensis*, ed. A. Chmiel, vol. 2, Kraków 1892, p. 187.

<sup>19</sup> H. Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w epoce Humanizmu (The University of Cracow in the Age of Humanism)*, Kraków 1935, p. 45.

bridge before leaving for France, Germany and Poland and next continued them in Germany because he arrived in Poland in 1518 as an educated humanist. If we assume this, then he must have completed his studies at Cambridge in 1518 or 1528, as in 1528 he went to Oxford with the aim of gaining an M. A.<sup>20</sup>

We know little about the years preceeding Coxe's arrival in Cracow. On his way to Germany and Poland he stopped over in Paris where he continued his studies with the help of his friend, a known philologist and publisher Henri Estienne (who was called in Latin Stephanus).<sup>21</sup> *Divi Eusebii Hieronymi epistola*, published in 1519 was dedicated by Coxe to the above mentioned meritorious French publisher, the inscription read: *Leonardus Coxus Henrico Stephano suo salutem.*<sup>22</sup>

Prior to his arrival in Poland Coxe also visited Germany where in Tübingen he most probably met young Philip Melanchton.<sup>23</sup> This meeting was to become very important for the English humanist's scholarly progress. Coxe would evidently revert in his scholarly work to Melanchton's views, he would use them as his model when writing his basic treatise on rhetorics.

Melanchton arrived in Tübingen in 1512, following Reuchlin's advice; two years later he gained a Master of Arts degree there and in the same year he started giving lectures on ancient literature.<sup>24</sup> His first works published in 1516 brought out certain interests in England<sup>25</sup> and Coxe's arrival in Tübingen may confirm this. Philip Melanchton discouraged with the conservatism of university professors etc., in 1518 left that town. Most probably shortly before Melanchton's departure Leonard Coxe visited him in Tübingen. Maybe, Coxe went to Tübingen attracted by Melanchton's new fame, or because of the polemics which were caused by his views in England. These views were discussed in Cambridge among young humanists and reformers to which William Tydale, John Firth and Hugh Latimer belonged. They met regularly to discuss the news from Germany where the Reformation movement was developing, since Coxe's ties with Cambridge may confirm his interest in these polemics. Perhaps Coxe learned more about Melanchton from Latimer, whose influence in Cambridge was considerable at that time.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> A. Wood: *Athenae Oxonienses*, vol. 1, London 1813, p. 123.

<sup>21</sup> L. Clément: *Henri Estienne et son oeuvre française*, Paris 1899.

<sup>22</sup> K. Estreicher: *Bibliografia polska (Polish Bibliography)*, vol. 18, p. 188.

<sup>23</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 45.

<sup>24</sup> G. Manschreck: *Melanchton. The Quiet Reformer*, New York 1968, p. 39.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 322.

<sup>26</sup> A. G. Chester: *Hugh Latimer. Apostle to the English*, Philadelphia 1954,

From the point of view of our consideration three facts concerning Coxe's stay in Tübingen are particularly important. Firstly, there we find the source of his serious interest in rhetorics. Coxe adopted many of Melanchton's views on this subject; Coxe's treatise on rhetorics is mainly based on Melanchton's works. Secondly, it seems that Coxe might have also acquired from Melanchton (not counting other sources) his enthusiasm for Erasmus of Rotterdam<sup>27</sup>, during his stay in Tübingen Melanchton was under the deep influence of Erasmus and instilled his cult into his students and friends. There is also a third fact which ties Coxe's fate with Melanchton. The German humanist and reformer, finding traditional and conservative trends in Tübingen unbearable, accepted the Saxon elector's invitation and on the 25.VIII.1518 left for Wittenberg. It can be assumed that the master's departure induced his English enthusiast to leave Tübingen and that Coxe also went to Wittenberg for a short while.<sup>28</sup>

Coxe's stay in Wittenberg could not have lasted long, because as early as 24.IX.1518 he enrolled at the University of Cracow<sup>29</sup> and on the 6.XII of that year he made a speech in the presence of Cracovian professors, in which he paid tribute to their university<sup>30</sup>; this speech paved his way into the circle of famous Polish university lecturers.

Leonard Coxe's arrival in Cracow was undoubtedly connected with the European fame of the Jagellonian University, which for a long time attracted students and professors from many countries.<sup>31</sup> Coxe's decision might have been influenced by J. L. Decius, a diplomat and historian in the time of Sigismund I, the secretary of the Boners who was soon to become the court secretary. It might have been, although there is a lack of clear evidence, that Coxe met Decius during one of the latter's many diplomatic journeys in Europe. Such a supposition seems to be justified by the fact that Decius was the patron of the English humanist during his first stay in Poland and that Coxe moved in his circle at the beginning of his stay in Cracow. It also seems that Decius could have given the English newcomer information and material needed to elaborate the speech *De laudibus celeberrimae Cracoviensis Academiae*.

<sup>27</sup> Manschreck: *op. cit.*, p. 41.

<sup>28</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 4, p. 1336.

<sup>29</sup> „Leonardus Coxus, Anglicus poeta laureatus, de Thama dioc. Linconiensis 24 septembris 4 gr. s[olvit]”. *Album studiosorum Universitatis Cracoviensis*, vol. 2, p. 187.

<sup>30</sup> *De laudibus celeberrimae Cracoviensis Academiae, Leonardi Coxi Britannii, Octavo Idus Decembris habita Oratio*, 1518, Cracoviae 1518.

<sup>31</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, passim. See also K. Lep-szy (ed.): *Dzieje Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w latach 1364—1764 (History of the Cracow University 1364—1764)*, vol. 1, Kraków 1964.

From the second half of the XVth century the progress and high standard of the University of Cracow was more than once emphasized by many foreign scholars and writers. It is worth reminding, for instance, the words of Eneas Sylvius Piccolomini (a subsequent pope — Pius II), who in 1458 noted: *Cracovia est praecipua regni civitas in qua liberalium artium schola floret*, adding to Cracow's characteristic the words: *Urbs litterarum studiis ornata*.<sup>32</sup> An eulogy of the University of Cracow written by Leonard Coxe half a century later was to become one of the most enthusiastic expressions of admiration and recognition, by a foreign scholar in the Renaissance era.

The fight for widening the humanistic influences was continued in Cracow in the first half of the XVIth century. It had — like in the second half of the XVth century — two aims: the mastering and teaching of ancient languages: Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and next giving lectures on ancient literature. Lectures on Greek grammar and somewhat later on Hebrew grammar and Greek literature were of a novelty. Moreover, into the programme of the faculty of Liberal Arts, up until this time based mainly on Aristotle philosophy, new humanities were included: rhetorics and epistolography. The Cracovian humanists and among them particularly the wondering ones usually calling themselves, like Leonard Coxe, poets, thought that the aim of their studies and teaching was the mastering of ancient languages and literature, they scoffed at the outdated, worthless old textbooks and the fruitless scholastical disputes, following in this respect the example of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Generally speaking, Coxe happened to be in Cracow at the beginning of the strengthening of formal and literary humanism, after the collapse, at the turn of the XVth and XVIth centuries, of the offensive and more radical humanistic ideology.

The arrival of the English humanist in the capital of Poland also occurred at the beginning of a new period in Polish cultural life, which was characterised by the intensification of Italian influences, especially in architecture and art. Just in 1518 there took place the wedding of King Sigismund I and Italian princess Bona Sforza, which was magnificently recorded by Decius. The year 1518 became the turning point in the development of Polish humanism marked by the deepening of this movement, wider contacts and intensification of artistic life.

Leonard Coxe's oration *On the Merits of the Illustrious University of Cracow*, delivered on the 6.XII.1518 before a numerously assembled auditorium of Cracovian professors, was a real display of humanistic rhetorics. This speech, interspersed with many quotations from classical

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<sup>32</sup> I. Zarębski: *Stosunki Eneasza Sylwiusza z Polską i Polakami (Piccolomini's Relations with Poland and Poles)*, Kraków 1939, pp. 59 and 77.

authors and humanistic writers with Erasmus at the head, makes a very high and in places exaggerated appraisal of the University of Cracow "the very Athens embracing all kinds of various virtues".<sup>33</sup> The flourish of the university was in Coxe's opinion so great, that it drew students and professors from the whole of Europe, from whom many „regarded themselves as sons of their mother” — the University of Cracow.<sup>34</sup>

Though Coxe treated in his eulogy of nearly all sciences cultivated in Cracow and many professors representing them, his attention gravitated towards rhetorics, that is the field, to which after his return to England, he was to devote his famous treatise *The Arte or Crafte of Rhetoryke*. Beside rhetorics Coxe shows a special admiration for „divine” poetry, but at the same time does not spare words of approval for, hated by humanists, dialectics, through which „the easiest way to the rest of learning is open”. The eulogy also refers to scholastical philosophy and its representing professors, which sounds rather strange in the words of a humanist and enthusiast of Erasmus of Rotterdam, confirming the panegyric character of the mentioned speech. At times the English humanist goes back to early history of the University of Cracow, often emphasizing the transitory character of that history, noting from one side strong humanistic influences and from the other one still existing medieval relics. He is enchanted by Cracow's location and its architecture (just at that time the royal palace received its magnificent Renaissance interior decorations) and expresses his admiration of the University of Cracow. Up until the very end of his stay in Poland Coxe showed a sincere attachment to our country and did not stop praising it by his pen. In 1527 he wrote:

*Romanis agri quondam laus maxima culti,  
Hunc quoque nunc ritum terra Polona tenet.  
Vomere donavit gentem, quam maxima virtus  
Aurea pro meritis sydera ferre daret.*<sup>35</sup>

On another occasion in a dedication to Decius he said that he owed everything to Poland<sup>36</sup> and these words formulated by the young English humanist whose first independent steps were enabled by the University of Cracow, were certainly expressed with great sincerity and conviction. In reality the years spent in Cracow on university work brought the highest achievements in Leonard Coxe's career. He never returned to the

<sup>33</sup> L. Coxe: *De laudibus celeberrimae Cracoviensis Academiae*.

<sup>34</sup> J. Nowak-Dłużewski: *Okolicznościowa poezja polityczna w Polsce. Czasy Zygmunta* (Political Poetry in Poland in the Age of Sigismunds), Warszawa 1966, p. 20.

<sup>35</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 48.

<sup>36</sup> *Adriani Cardinalis Venatio una cum scholiis non ineruditus Leonardi Coxi Britanni, Cracoviae 1524*,

University Chair and spent the rest of his life as a schoolmaster in small schools far from large academic centres.

In his oration given on 6.XII.1518 in honour of the University of Cracow and its masters, Leonard Coxe began with praising the professors of logic. He had not met the Thomist-philosopher, deceased in 1507, and astronomer John of Głogow<sup>37</sup>, but he highly appraised his achievements, writing that much can be learned from his work. John of Głogow was indeed a representative of comprehensive and medieval universalism, a scholar describing and commenting on all branches of knowledge which entered into the recognised canon of Liberal Arts. John of Głogow was also an astronomer and astrologer. Besides, he was interested in geography and belonged to the first Cracovian professors who showed interest in new geographical discoveries and conquests of the Columbus era. The last work of this scholar was the text book on the art of divination (*Computus chirometralis*). In this way, modernity in John of Głogow's writing coexisted with traditionalism and Leonard Coxe rightly observed the transitory character of the period, which the University of Cracow was going through at that time.

From the less known professors of logic and metaphysics Coxe came across in Cracow and highly appraised John Leopolita senior, about whom Leonard Coxe's patron, the vice-chancellor Peter Tomicki wrote on the news of his death:

„He appeared to be not only the University's and the town of Cracow's, but the whole of our country's, one and only ornament and light. There has not been anyone in the human memory of our country, who would connect such knowledge with such a lawful and unimpeachable life”.<sup>38</sup>

Leopolita was a respected Scotist-philosopher, theologian and an outstanding preacher, which connected with his truly evangelic way of life, gained him the friendship of many contemporaries.

With a certain approbation Coxe also mentioned in a group of Cracovian philosophers who were in reality unoriginal: Michael of Olsna and James Kleparz. The latter was the cathedral preacher in Cracow after the death of Leopolita, the author of little inspiring writings, although contemporaries saw in him a great learned man and very worthy morals. In the words of Peter Tomicki he was „a serious man, [...] gifted with uncommon knowledge as well as with special virtues and unstained morals and first of all with a good command of the Polish language”.<sup>39</sup>

Turning from philosophy to poetry, Coxe stressed the fact that many

<sup>37</sup> M. Zwiercan: *Jan z Głogowa* [in] *Polski słownik biograficzny (Polish National Biography)*, vol. 10, 1963, pp. 450—452.

<sup>38</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 186f.

<sup>39</sup> *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. 10, no 167.

authors lived in Cracow and tried to excuse himself for not being able to name all the important and to pay the tribute which they deserved. So, first he mentioned two writers of the name of Erasmus, already deceased in 1518, who — as he writes in a panegyric exultation — would have equaled Erasmus of Rotterdam, if fate had not taken so early from this world. First of the two mentioned was Erasmus Morstin who — as Coxe put it — „to the immortal glory of such an illustrious family, tried to add the fame of his knowledge”.<sup>40</sup> Erasmus Beck was the second Polish Erasmus mentioned by Coxe. According to the English humanist he combined wisdom with eloquence in which he equalled Politian himself. Both poets, so praised by the English guest, are hardly known in fact and did not play an important role. The ecstasies over their works should be attributed to panegyric humanistic exaggeration.

We also do not know much about John of Szadek's poetry of whom Coxe speaks with respect as well („*insignis poeta*”). A better known figure is John of Wislica (died about 1520) if it is him that Coxe had on his mind when mentioning John „Ruthenus” and comparing him with Ovid. He was the follower of Paul of Krosno and a friend of the Swiss humanist Valentine Eck who at the same time was on good terms with Coxe.

The praises that Coxe sang of Paul of Krosno (died 1517) seem to be more founded. He was one of the most outstanding Polish-Latin poets at the beginning of the XVIth century, a student and next professor of the University of Cracow.<sup>41</sup> He lectured on Ovid, Lucan, Seneca, Terentius, Virgil and other great Roman poets and writers and his influence on many Polish poets of that time was evident. Among the followers of Paul of Krosno there were John Dantiscus and John of Wislica.

From among the poets whom he met in Cracow, Coxe praised John of Oswiecim (died 1527), a graduate of the University of Cracow and Italian universities. During his studies in Rome he most probably met Francesco Filelfo and from 1475 lectured on Cicero and Aristotle in Cracow. Appreciated as a speaker John of Oswiecim was a chaplain of three Polish kings (John Albertus, Alexander and Sigismund I) and a Polish envoy to Lithuania and Italy.<sup>42</sup> One of his followers noted that John of Oswiecim was „the keenest advocate of the university, a man proficient in public affairs and because of this valuable to Polish kings whom he kept com-

<sup>40</sup> K. Morawski: *Czasy Zygmuntowskie na tle prądów Odrodzenia (The Age of Sigismund and its Renaissance Background)*, ed. J. Tazbir, Warszawa 1965, pp. 18.

<sup>41</sup> *Nowy Korbut. Piśmiennictwo staropolskie (Bibliography of Polish Literature)*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1964, pp. 219—221.

<sup>42</sup> Barycz: *Jan z Oświęcimia* [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 10, 1963, pp. 467—468.

pany and served at Court and outside it"<sup>43</sup>, while Leonard Coxe spoke of him as being the follower of Filelfo and a person worth better examination.

Among Polish poets Andrew Krzycki received the warmest words of praise from the English humanist and — as is referred to below — became one of the Polish Erasmians closest to the English guest (*Alter uero Andreas, tam doctus, elegans, in sermone lepidus, et in stilo magnificus...*<sup>44</sup> — wrote Leonard Coxe about Krzycki).

Coxe in his oration stressed the attractiveness of the University of Cracow and the fact that many professors from abroad, especially lecturers in poetry, were there. He mentioned among them Joannes Silvius Amatus Siculus "who, teaching here for many years politiores litterae [i.e. commenting poetry], fed his mind with extraordinarily difficult learning"<sup>45</sup>. Siculus of Sicilian origin, was a professor of the University of Cracow from 1506; in his poem he glorified victory of Sigismund I over Moscow and was a teacher of the next to last king from the Jagellonian line. The personality of Amatus Siculus and his knowledge of classical literature attracted to Cracow many young people, ardent lovers of humanistics. Anyway, Siculus was praised not only by Leonard Coxe; there are enthusiastic opinions about him by the German humanist Andrew Boner who arrived in Cracow at the beginning of the XVIth century. Apart from Siculus, Coxe also praised another Italian poet who lectured in Cracow and contributed to the establishment of Greek studies. This was Constanzo Claretti de 'Cancellieri, who was on friendly terms with a well known Polish humanist and diplomat, bishop Erasmus Ciołek to whom he dedicated one of his poems as to his patron.

In his encomium of the University of Cracow Leonard Coxe mentions not only famous Italians but also German humanists attracted to Cracow by the fame of the Jagellonian University. Among them he mentions in the first place the well known Conrad Celtis, who commenced his studies in Germany and Italy and completed them in Cracow where he listened to lectures given by Albertus of Brudzew himself. In collaboration with Philip Callimachus he founded in Cracow a humanistic academy called *Sodalitas Vistulana* and finally formed his poetical talent in the capital of Poland.<sup>46</sup> *Sodalitas Vistulana* founded in 1490 carried out scholarly classical studies in Greco-Latin civilization, Plato's philosophy,

<sup>43</sup> W. Pocięcha: *Królowa Bona. Czasy i ludzie Odrodzenia* (Queen Bona. The Age and People of the Renaissance), vol. 2, Poznań 1949, p. 38.

<sup>44</sup> Coxe: *De laudibus...*, fol. 3b.

<sup>45</sup> Morawski: *Czasy Zygmuntofskie...*, p. 19.

<sup>46</sup> A. Jelicz: *Konrad Celtis na tle wczesnego Renesansu w Polsce* (Conrad Celtis and the Early Polish Renaissance), Warszawa 1956.

history and geography, modelled the humanistic point of view and like Italian humanistic institutions of that kind played a creative role in the development of new trends in Poland.

After Celtes Leonard Coxe mentioned the poet Laurence Corvinus (real name Rabe or Raabe), a humanist from Silesia, a graduate and next professor of the University of Cracow, Celtes's collegian and a member of above mentioned *Sodalitas Vistulana*. After years of peregrination Corvinus returned to Cracow in 1518 just to admire the wedding of Sigismund I and Bona and resound in a poem the praises of those magnificent ceremonies.<sup>47</sup>

The English humanist also did not grudge words of approbation for the German scholar Henry Bebel, emphasizing the merits of his intellect and talent. He also mentioned Wenceslas Koler from Hirschberg, a graduate and professor of the University of Cracow, an excellent expert in Latin, Greek and Hebrew.

„Our Wenceslas — said Coxe — a rare adornment indeed, not only of your town, but also of the whole of Silesia, perfectly acquainted with Hebrew, Greek and Latin, knows the secrets of nature and understands the essence and proprieties of each phenomenon to such a degree that he seems to me, by God, to share secrets of nature itself”.<sup>48</sup>

Koler was one of the first Cracovian hebraists and Leonard Coxe correctly estimated his role, though he did so with a panegyric exaggeration characteristic of the era. New researches on the library inventories of Cracovian professors, actually reveal the wide humanistic interests of Wenceslas Koler and his valuable library proves his versatile knowledge of Latin, Greek and Hebrew works, just as the works of the humanists including Erasmus of Rotterdam first and foremost.

The English humanist did not ignore Rudolf Agricola, a follower of Paul of Krosno, who in 1517 lectured in Cracow on poetry. By the Emperor Maximilian I Agricola was granted the title of *poeta laureatus*; he also lectured in Vienna and in the years 1518—1519 taught Italian pages of Queen Bona's train.<sup>49</sup> This was just the Agricola whom Leonard Coxe substituted on the chair of humanities about which fact he informed Erasmus in 1527.<sup>50</sup> Among the poets Coxe mentioned the great Polish diplomat and poet John Dantiscus and also Decius (see *infra*), his own and

<sup>47</sup> H. Barycz: *Wawrzyniec Corvinus (Laurence Corvinus)* [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 4, 1938.

<sup>48</sup> Coxe: *De laudibus...*, fol. 3b.

<sup>49</sup> H. Barycz: *Rudolf Agricola młodszy* [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 1, 1935.

<sup>50</sup> K. Miaskowski [ed.]: *Erasmiana. Die Korrespondenz des Erasmus von Rotterdam mit Polen*, Paderborn 1900—1901, no 6.

scholars' patron, and furthermore Bartholomew of Wrocław, Gregory of Stawiszyn and others.

After short references to Cracovian mathematicians (Stanislas of Cracow, Nicolas of Tuliszw and others) and geographers, Leonard Coxe writes at length on the fame of the Polish astronomers from among the Cracow circle. At first he pays tribute to the late great scientists: Albertus of Brudzew and John of Glogow. The first acquired renown as an outstanding astronomer and mathematician, to him Cracow was indebted for the modernization of astronomical studies. John of Glogow was a more traditional type of scholar, the author of compilatory manuals, a versatile scientist, *vir omniquaque doctissimus, decus singulare Universitatis Cracoviensis* — as the contemporaries called him.<sup>51</sup>

Passing to his contemporary Cracow astronomers, Coxe praises among others the versatile Matthew of Miechow who, at the time of the English humanist's arrival in Poland, was still the rector of the University of Cracow and one of its main pillars.<sup>52</sup> His wide influence and sympathetic attitude was stressed by Coxe in the words: *non magis est corporis quam animae medicus*.<sup>53</sup> As a physician, geographer, astronomer and chronicler Matthew Miechow had a wide influence on the state of the university and Polish science in this period; he founded new university departments and was concerned with the fate of schools in Cracow and Miechow. He may have been one of the first followers of Copernicus's theory. His chronicle (*Tractatus de duabus Sarmatiis*) written in 1517, was a widely known description of East Europe in the geographical and ethnographical respect and affected the formation of Western European authors' views.

Coxe also mentioned the merits of Martin Biem of Olkusz, an astronomer and theologian, a graduate and professor of the University of Cracow, one of the most outstanding mathematicians of that time and the main representative of mathematic and astronomical sciences cultivated in Cracow. Nicolas Copernicus belonged to his Cracow students and the contact that they made based on mutual scientific interests was to last the following long years.<sup>54</sup> Next to Martin Biem Leonard Coxe praised Michael Falkener of Wrocław, a typical eclectic not exceeding beyond worn formulas and way of thinking. He was an epigonus of the medieval philosophical thought, an eclectic moving around, commentaries, introductions,

<sup>51</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 244.

<sup>52</sup> H. Barycz: *Maciej Miechowita. Studium z dziejów kultury naukowej Polski doby Odrodzenia (Matthew of Miechow. A Study of Intellectual Life in Renaissance Poland)*, „Nauka Polska”, 1958, no 3.

<sup>53</sup> Coxe: *De laudibus...*, fol. 1d.

<sup>54</sup> A. Birkenmajer: *Marcin Biem [in:] Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 2, 1936.

repenters and summaries and his numerous books did not differ in anything from many other works of this type. He was interested in logic, theology, astronomy and physics, but the most known and most often used was his text-book on dialectics.<sup>55</sup>

From the field of music the English humanist mentioned Henry Finck adding that his fame had even reached England and the farthest extremes of the world.<sup>56</sup> This brought up in Poland musician was the conductor of the court orchestra of three successive Jagellonians — John Albertus, Alexander and Sigismund I and according to his relative Herman Finck, also a musician connected with the Gorka family, he owed everything to Poland: "thanks to the magnanimity of King Albertus and his brothers he reached such a high perfection in art".<sup>57</sup> In later years Henry Finck travelled over Europe a great deal, was the Emperor Maximilian's court musician and composed quite a lot. He and his descendants were grateful to Poland, which gave Finck his musical education and assured him good conditions to develop his musical talent.

Coxe did not omit in his speech Cracovian professor of law among whom in the first place he named Andrew Gora, the teacher of the first Polish statute codificator John Łaski. For many years Gora was a professor of the University of Cracow and twice its rector; Coxe met this meritorious Cracovian lawyer who died in 1520, two years before his death.<sup>58</sup> Next to him the English humanist mentioned the famous Cracovian canonist and rector of the University of Cracow James of Ercieszow, a doctor of decrees, and a charge of bishop John Konarski. Ercieszowski eight times rector of the University of Cracow, was considered an outstanding specialist in the field of canon law and theology.<sup>59</sup> The third person from among the Cracovian lawyers mentioned by Coxe, was Dominic of Secymin, „*decretorum doctor insignis*”, a chancellor of the Gniezno cathedral, a highly appreciated jurist and diplomat of Sigismund I.

In a short characteristics of Lodovico d'Alifio, Coxe emphasized the influence of Italian humanism on Cracow. Doctor d'Alifio was Queen Bona's secretary<sup>60</sup> and in her name he gave a speech during the magnificent greeting ceremonies in Cracow in 1518 for the Italian princess, which Coxe might have watched if he arrived at the capital in the spring of that year. Outstandingly talented at the age of 18 d'Alifio was conferred

<sup>55</sup> B a r y c z: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 246.

<sup>56</sup> C o x e: *De laudibus...*, fol. 3c.

<sup>57</sup> *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 3, London 1954, p. 111.

<sup>58</sup> T. G l e m m a and H. B a r y c z: *Andrzej Góra* [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 7, 1960.

<sup>59</sup> H. B a r y c z: *Jakub Arciszewski*, *ibid.*, vol. 1, 1935.

<sup>60</sup> P o c i e c h a: *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 77.

in Naples a doctors degree in both laws. After his arrival in Cracow he became a professor and in 1518 began lectures on Roman law. Leonard Coxe who in September 1518 entered the University of Cracow circle praised Lodovico d'Alifio as a "venerable commentator of laws, who even though devoted to the court as Queen Bona's secretary, everyday here solves questions of law and being a fluent expert in both laws, wishes many others to be like him".<sup>61</sup>

In the field of philosophy Leonard Coxe mentioned the merits of John of Stobnica, who died in the year the English humanist arrived in Cracow. As early as 1494 he became a Bachelor and in 1498 a Master of Arts and from that year he lectured in Cracow propagating there the principals and conceptions of Scotism. He was also interested in theology and geography, had a high opinion of the Roman writers (Cicero, Seneca, Virgil)<sup>62</sup> and referred to humanism in a restrained but favourable manner. For these reasons the young Englishman could have been attracted by the humanistic interests of John of Stobnica who published among others his commentary to the dialogue of Leonard Aretino, a well known Italian humanist.<sup>63</sup> This publication earned him the recognition of humanists and was widely quoted. His geographical work *Introductio in Ptolemei cosmographiam* etc. from 1512, won him equal fame, showing his knowledge not only of ancient geographers but also the results of his contemporary research. The work was one of the first attempts in Poland to surmount the authority of Ptolemy and introduce new achievements of the era of great discoveries into geography.<sup>64</sup>

Besides John of Stobnica two other Cracovian philosophers: John Sommerfeld and John of Głogow received a posthumous tribute from the English humanist. John Sommerfeld senior called Aesticampianus, was according to Coxe well educated in philosophy and „among priests of Muses and Apollo did not hold a secondary position”.<sup>65</sup> The English humanist also mentioned Sommerfeld's didactical merits. It is interesting, that his fame remained in Cracow for so long that Coxe 17 years after the death of the philosopher (John Sommerfeld died in 1501) still came across such a high opinion about im. Sommerfeld studied in Cracow in the years 1479—1481, there in 1485 he obtained the degree of Master of Liberal Arts and later as a professor of the University of Cracow com-

<sup>61</sup> Coxe: *De laudibus...*, fol. 2d.

<sup>62</sup> J. Tarnowska: *Jan ze Stobnicy* [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 10,

<sup>63</sup> Bruni Leonard Aretinus: *In moralem disciplinam introductio familiari Johannis de Stobnicza commentario explanata*, Cracoviae 1511.

<sup>64</sup> F. Bujak: *Studia geograficzno-historyczne (Studies in History and Geography)*, Kraków 1925, pp. 41—47.

<sup>65</sup> Coxe: *De laudibus...*, fol. 2d.

mented on Aristotle, Roman classics and works of humanists.<sup>66</sup> He owned a valuable library which was adorned by works of classical authors and Italian humanists (among others Ficino's commentaries). The second Cracovian philosopher mentioned with Sommerfeld — John of Głogow — was discussed above. With his name Coxe began, as mentioned, the praising of Cracovian professors.

Eventually among theologians, at the very end of his speech, Leonard Coxe mentioned first dominican Ludolf, whom he called «*provincialem praedicatorum, theologiaeque facultatis ornamentum et decus*».<sup>67</sup> Ludolf received his doctor's insignia, as early as 1502 in Ferrara and owing to his abilities reached high honours in the monastery, becoming the Provincial of Polish Dominicans. He died in 1519.

Leonard Coxe also dedicated a short reference to another Cracovian theologian Stanislas Biel of Nowe Miasto near Przemysl. Biel obtained his masters degree in Liberal Arts in 1485 and next lectured in Cracow on the poetry of Virgil and Ovid. Later he turned towards Aristotle and theological studies, which he crowned with a doctors degree in 1502. He visited Italy and Germany but he was tied for good with the University of Cracow and was elected its rector ten times during the years 1509—1532. In 1509 he greeted Sigismund I returning to Cracow from his Wallachian expedition and in 1518 delivered a speech during the ceremonial entrance of Queen Bona to Cracow. Biel was a follower of new humanistic trends and in his speech he expressed the hopes which the University of Cracow set on the arrival of the Italian princess in Poland.<sup>68</sup>

Much less merited for the University of Cracow was another theologian mentioned by the English humanist — Matthew of Szydłow, whom bishop Konarski had to remove in 1514 from the Cracow Chapter because of his debauched way of life. Another theologian Nicolas Mikosz also did not contribute much to the development of the university, but at least bequeathed the university his library and a certain amount of money for the extention of the university. At the end of his praise of Cracow masters, Leonard Coxe at last mentioned the theologian Michael Falkener who was mentioned earlier.

At the end of his oration paying tribute to patrons of learning, the University of Cracow and capital of Poland, Leonard Coxe entrusts himself to the University of Cracow, the mother of learning and scholars — as he said: *fac me dignum tante genitricis filium appellari ad meos redire*

<sup>66</sup> J. Fijałek: *Studia z dziejów uniwersytetu krakowskiego i jego wydziału teologicznego w XV wieku (Studies on the Cracow University and its Faculty of Theology in the XVth Century)*, Kraków 1898.

<sup>67</sup> Coxe: *De laudibus...*, fol. 2d.

<sup>68</sup> Pocięcha: *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 231.

*Britannos*.<sup>69</sup> He also assured, that on his return to England, he would still praise and resound his Cracovian students and patrons.

Coxe's speech, so pleasant for Polish ears a praise of the University of Cracow, significantly brought the desired result and opened him the doors leading to a university chair. Already in the summer term of 1519, the English humanist lectured on Livius<sup>70</sup>, and the letters of Saint Jerome<sup>71</sup>, according to the text fixed by Erasmus of Rotterdam, beginning in this way Erasmian lectures in Cracow. Coxe invited his followers to the Jerusalem Bourse for collective reading of the Master of Rotterdam, gathering around him, during the years spent in Cracow, Polish Erasmians with Andrew Krzycki, John à Lasco junior and Andrew Zebrzydowski at the head. After a few years we meet up with the English humanist's lectures for the second time in the winter term of 1525, when he lectured on Virgil and Cicero.<sup>72</sup> In the summer term of 1526, Coxe once again lectured on Virgil and also Quintilian.<sup>73</sup>

As mentioned above, Coxe's first stay in Poland during the years 1518—1519 was connected to a large degree with his patron and protector — Jost Louis Decius. J. L. Decius, diplomat, historian and economist, was for many years the secretary of the Cracovian banker and salt miner John Boner and from 1520 the secretary and diplomat of King Sigismund I. Decius was characterised by his abilities and love of knowledge and gained himself a certain position among Polish and foreign humanists. Erasmus of Rotterdam himself dedicated him one of his works. Decius was also interested in literature and historical work and the history of Poland written by him in Latin and published in 1521, is an important source of knowledge of the earlier period of Sigismund I reign.<sup>74</sup>

It has already been mentioned, that Leonard Coxe dedicated his praising speech in 1518 in honour of the University of Cracow just to Decius in the words: *Leonardus Coxus Britannus Iodoco Ludovico Decio Moecenati suo*, mentioning the merits and wide humanistic interests of the Boners secretary. To this same patron, he dedicated another work with a commentary — cardinal Hadrian de Castello's *Venatio*<sup>75</sup> — pub-

<sup>69</sup> Coxe: *De laudibus...*, fol. 3d.

<sup>70</sup> *Liber diligentiarum facultatis artisticae Universitatis Cracoviensis (1487—1563)*, ed. W. Wisłocki, „Archiwum do Dziejów Literatry i Oświaty w Polsce”, vol. 4, 1886, p. 139.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, p. XII.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 173.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 395.

<sup>74</sup> W. Pocięcha: *Jost Ludwik Decjusz* [in:] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 5, p. 42.

<sup>75</sup> *Adriani Cardinalis Venatio...*, Cracoviae 1524.

lished in 1524. It seems to appear from this dedication, that Coxe had some serious financial commitments towards Decius, who had helped the English humanist materially in a critical period. This help awoke in Leonard Coxe an even greater gratefulness and attachment to Decius with whom he was tied by their common humanistic interests. Decius drew the English humanist's attention to the above mentioned work, which fact was stressed by Coxe in his dedication to Decius in the following words: „this book was close to your heart and during my stay in Poland, to which I owe everything, you often recommended this work above all others”.<sup>76</sup> Decius thought this work to be especially helpful in the teaching of young people among others because of the classical Latin, in which it was written. Hadrian de Castello (Adrianus Castellanus) was a known advocate in the battle for the classical purity of Latin, so it is nothing strange that Decius and Coxe got to like his work, published for the first time in Italy in 1505.

One of Coxe's first friends on Polish soil was the Silesian poet Matthew Holstein and it seems that Decius, who willingly surrounded himself with Silesian writers, might have introduced him to the English humanist. When Holstein on the basis of Erasmus of Rotterdam's edition, published one of Saint Jerome's letters, Leonard Coxe wrote a preface to it.<sup>77</sup> Here we have further proof of a strong and lasting for many years Erasmian interests of the English humanist.

The analysis of Coxe's dedications from this period indicates, that in Cracow he found himself amidst learned and well known middle class representatives of the Polish capital. Whereas in 1519, he dedicated his published Saint Jerome's letter to a famous French publisher Henri Estienne (see above), he dedicated the work of John Jovius Pontana entitled *De laudibus divinis* published and commented in 1520 to two members of the known patrician Cracow family — Andrew and Nicolas Salomon, whom he called his patrons.<sup>78</sup>

„Accept therefore, friends or rather the best patrons — wrote the English humanist — from your Coxe this gift, which he bestows on you, not only because of the kindness shown to him, but also because of your unusual virtues”.<sup>79</sup>

Also patronising the English admirer of Erasmus of Rotterdam was the Cracow bishop John Konarski, a protector of literature and writers and one of the first Polish humanist bishops. In agreement with bishops, Pe-

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 3a.

<sup>77</sup> *Hieronimus Eusebius Stridonensis Epistula ad Rusticum Monachum, qua vivendi formam praescribit, per Erasmum Rotterdamum dilligentissime recognita*, Cracoviae 1518.

<sup>78</sup> *Ioannis Ioviani Pontani De laudibus divinis opusculum cum argumentis Leonardi Coxi Britanni*, Cracoviae 1520, fol. 2a.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 2a.

ter Tomicki, Matthew Drzewicki and John Lubranski, Konarski led a battle for the reform of the University of Cracow, especially for the development of the theological studies. Matthew Miechowita and Rudolf Agricola, whose versified praise of the University of Cracow was placed as an introduction to the published edition of Coxe's speech in 1518, owed him a great deal. Leonard Coxe devoted to bishop Konarski his hymn in praise of Saint John, printed at the end of the mentioned work, dedicated to Andrew and Nicolas Salomon. In the last verse Coxe mentioned the Cracow bishop whom he called his patron and Polion.<sup>80</sup>

It appears from the dedication of the mentioned Pontan's work, *De laudibus divinis*, that Coxe was still in Cracow in February 1520. It was most probably due to Decius that Coxe entered the circle of Cracovian humanists, who were joined by the common cult of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Everything indicates that Leonard Coxe greatly contributed in extending the influence of Erasmus in Poland and that from this point of view, his role in the Cracow society should be appreciated.

In spite of the friendly welcome and numerous friends Coxe did not stay long in Cracow during his first visit. There is some circumstantial evidence that he visited England in 1519 and that the note contained in a letter from the reign of Henry VIII connected with a certain mission entrusted to Leonard Cokks, who was to transfer some goods from Tournay to Antwerp, refers to him.<sup>81</sup> Nothing more is known about this mission, however it is certain that at the beginning of 1520 Coxe left for Levocza and Kosice in Hungary, where he stayed for 5 years (1520—1524) and next returned to Cracow. Nevertheless a certain contact between the English humanist and the University of Cracow remained during this period; in 1522 Coxe delivered in Cracow a prelection explaining the work of Erasmus *De duplici Copia verborum ac rerum*, to which he used to refer later in his pedagogical works.

Most probably Leonard Coxe arrived in Hungary in the spring of 1520; the Levocza town records show that in July 1520 he was appointed the rector of a school in that town for two years.<sup>82</sup> He received this appointment with the backing of his new patron — John Henckel, a former student of the University of Cracow<sup>83</sup>, the confessor of the Hungarian

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 5b.

<sup>81</sup> *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, ed. J. S. Brewer, vol. 3, London 1867, no 153.

<sup>82</sup> M. Sokołowski: *Studia do historii rzeźby w Polsce w XV i XVI w.* (*Studies on the Polish Sculpture in the XVth and XVIth Centuries*), „Sprawozdania Komisji Historii Sztuki”, vol. 7, Kraków 1906, p. 227.

<sup>83</sup> F. Kovacs: *Uniwersytet Krakowski a kultura węgierska* (*The Cracow University and the Hungarian Civilization*), Wrocław 1965, p. 87. See also U. Szumska: *op. cit.*, p. 58.

Queen Mary and a great enthusiast of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Coxe did not stay long at this post and at the end of 1521, transferred to a similar position in Kosice where his protector John Henckel just then became a provost.<sup>84</sup>

At the beginning of the XVIth century many outstanding foreign humanists wondered from Cracow to Hungary as e.g. Rudolf Agricola and Valentine Eck, in which a certain role may have been played by the Polish-Hungarian Turzon family, which contributed greatly to the economical and cultural life of Poland at that time.<sup>85</sup> Closely connected with this family was the Hungarian court preacher John Henckel and moreover Levocza was the Turzon's home town. During that time Coxe remained in close relations with Valentine Eck, a Swiss poet and a graduate of the University of Cracow<sup>86</sup>, who after leaving Cracow found himself under the wings of the Turzons in Hungary. We also have a direct proof that Leonard Coxe was under the patronage of the Hungarian branch of the Turzons. After the English humanist's departure from Cracow, his poem prefaced Valentine Eck's work *De mundi contemptu et virtute amplectenda*<sup>87</sup>, which Coxe also supplied with a dedication to one of the Turzons, Count of Spisz and a great lover of literature<sup>88</sup>.

Coxe stayed in Kosice nearly three years up until the end of 1524, as it appears from his dedication in the above mentioned work of Hadrian de Castello.<sup>89</sup> In the summer term of 1525 we meet him again at the University of Cracow where as an extraordinary professor he took over Agricola's lectures on humanistics.<sup>90</sup> In a letter to Erasmus from 28.III 1527, he signed himself as a *pūblicus hic bonarum litterarum professor*<sup>91</sup>; it is known that he had two prelections daily — but as the dean noted — he lectured very negligently (*negligentissime*). Up to the winter term of 1526/27 inclusively he commented on classical authors (Virgil, Cicero, Quintilian)<sup>92</sup> for two hours a day, on Cicero's *De oratore*, which confirms that he continued his earlier interests in rhetorics.

The years of Leonard Coxe's second stay in Poland (1525—1527) were

<sup>84</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 46.

<sup>85</sup> J. Ptaśnik: *Rodzina Turzonów w Polsce i ich stosunki z Fuggerami (Turzon Family in Poland and Their Relations with Fuggers)*, „Przewodnik Naukowy i Literacki”, vol. 30, 1905.

<sup>86</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 37.

<sup>87</sup> Valentinus Eccius: *De mundi contemptu et virtute amplectenda, Leonardus Corus Britannus libellum pio commendat*, Cracoviae 1528.

<sup>88</sup> Ptaśnik: *Rodzina Turzonów...*, p. 119.

<sup>89</sup> *Adriani Cardinalis Venatio...*, Cracoviae 1524.

<sup>90</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 47.

<sup>91</sup> Miaskowski: *op. cit.*, no 6.

<sup>92</sup> *Liber diligentiarum*, pp. 173, 175, 178, XII.

fruitful in his literary and editorial work. In February 1526 he published a letter by Martin Luther to Henry VIII and the English king's reply<sup>93</sup>, adding to them his letter to chancellor Christopher Szydłowiecki. Luther's letter was a reply to the pamphlet published by Henry VIII in 1521, *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum*, in which the English king harshly condemned Luther's views. Coxe's interests in the beginning Reformation in Germany could have reached back to the period of his stay in Cambridge where just about 1518 religious innovations coming from Germany were widely discussed. This interest could also be connected with the circle of Leonard Coxe's new protector — Andrew Krzycki. Just at this time Krzycki led a sharp attack against Luther and his religious followers in Poland, in connection with which he published two works: *On the Image of Luther* and *The Commandment of a Good Lutheran*.<sup>94</sup>

In the same year Coxe published a paper, which testifies, that also the vice-chancellor and Cracovian bishop, one of the greatest Polish protectors of learning and art in the Renaissance era — Peter Tomicki — was the English humanist's new patron. Coxe dedicated to him the published in April 1526, paper on the education of youth<sup>95</sup>, written in the form of a letter to the vice-chancellor of Poland. In it the English humanist wrote about such a highly valued by Peter Tomicki need for youth education in the humanistic spirit, the importance of philological studies and knowledge of classical languages. Evidently this paper was liked by Tomicki as he appointed Leonard Coxe a teacher at his court school (see below). In this same year Coxe published another paper which shows his, at that time, interest in didactics and teaching. This was *Methodus humaniorum studiorum*<sup>96</sup>, having an unquestionable connection with Coxe's new work at Tomicki's court school. The text of the paper is lost and nothing closer is known about its scope and contents.

A number of small Coxe's works are scattered in various publications, brought out mainly at the printing house of the meritorious Jerome Wietor in Cracow. Coxe's rhymed preface can be found in Murmelius's dictionary published in 1526 in three languages: Polish, Latin and German.<sup>97</sup> In his preface he called upon school youth to acquire this profitable

<sup>93</sup> *Epistula Martini Lutheri ad Henricum VIII, Angliae et Franciae regem etc., qua veniam petit eorum, quae prius stultus ac praeceps in eundem, regem effunderit etc. Responso dicti invicti Angliae ac Franciae Regis defensoris fidei*, Cracoviae 1526.

<sup>94</sup> Nowak - Dłużewski: *op. cit.*, p. 87.

<sup>95</sup> *Libellum de erudienda iuventute per Leonardum Coxum, Anglum*, Cracoviae 1526.

<sup>96</sup> L. Coxe: *Methodus humaniorum studiorum*, Cracoviae 1526.

<sup>97</sup> J. Murmelius: *Dictionarius variarum rerum tum pueris, tum adultis utilissimus, cum Germanica atque Polonica interpretatione*, Cracoviae 1526.

text book, which might be very helpful in learning foreign languages. Coxe wrote a similar rhymed introduction to the work of the mentioned Valentine Eck's *De mundi contemptu*, as well as to Nicolas of Szadek's *Iudicium astronomicum*.<sup>98</sup> In the preface written to the work of Andrew Krzycki<sup>99</sup>, published by Wietor in 1527, Coxe quite clearly declares himself to be against the Reformation, which together with his edition of Henry VIII and Martin Luther's letter published a year earlier, throws a light on Coxe's anti Luther attitude in this period. The English humanist in preface to Krzycki's paper pointed out the dangers of the Reformation, called religious reformers „*rapaces lupi*” who had covered themselves in sheep skin and aimed at destroying everything which „Holy Fathers had created”.

From among Coxe's other works in this period the poem in praise of John à Lasco junior<sup>100</sup>, is worth mentioning, who just at that time returned to Cracow from Paris, Padua and Basel where he studied humanities among others under the guidance of Erasmus of Rotterdam himself. Just then John à Lasco bought Erasmus's library and left it to him to use for life.

During his second stay in Poland Coxe was especially active as a publisher of many writings of classical authors. In 1527 he published Horatio's *Epodon and Carmen saeculare* and next Statius's first book of *Silvae*, with his own commentary. Also at this time he prepared for printing two rhetorical works by Cicero: *Ad Marcum Brutum de oratore* and *De claris oratoribus*, which were published in Cracow in 1528. On the whole Coxe's own works, as well as writings published and commented by him, show a wide range of typical humanistic interests with a distinct Erasmian accent. Also visible is his lasting interest in rhetorics to which after his return to England he devoted his most famous work. Like in the above discussed, praising speech in honour of the University of Cracow in 1518, one can see certain inconsistencies in his attitude, namely a positive opinion of medieval learning which humanists so impetuously condemned. We have in mind here the praise of Nicolas of Szadek, a Cracow professor who represented rather a medieval attitude and past universalism. From 1515 he held the Chair of Astrology and in accordance with his duties as propagator of this knowledge, each year published in Latin and Polish astrological prognostics recommending his „illustrious and divine knowledge [...] through which man becomes like God”.<sup>101</sup> Apart

<sup>98</sup> M. Szadek: *Iudicium astronomicum*, Cracoviae 1527.

<sup>99</sup> *De afflictione ecclesiae commentarius in Psalmum XXI per Andream Cracovium ep. Prem.*, Cracoviae 1527.

<sup>100</sup> Szumska: *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>101</sup> Barycz: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 271.

from prophecy Nicolas of Szadek most probably was also occupied with serious mathematical and astronomical studies, we know that Copernicus corresponded with him.

In as much as during his first stay in Cracow, Leonard Coxe was mainly under the care of J. L. Decius, the second time his patrons were Andrew Krzycki, Peter Tomicki and Christopher Szydłowiecki, that is the most outstanding representatives of the cultural patronage in Poland in the Renaissance era. It seems that closer bonds connected the English Erasmian particularly with Andrew Krzycki, the nephew of the vice-chancellor Tomicki, the secretary of King Sigismund I and Bona, the bishop of Przemyśl and Płock, later the archbishop and primate of Poland. As a humanist Krzycki kept in contact with outstanding persons of the era, among others with Melancthon, whom he tried to bring to Poland. Philip Melancthon, a person close to the English humanist, was within the interest of Krzycki also in later years. For instance Krzycki had in mind the writing of an epithalamium for the marriage of George Sabin, the first rector of the University of Königsberg, to Melancthon's daughter.<sup>102</sup> Apart from Krzycki the roles of Coxe's patrons were also played by vice-chancellor Peter Tomicki and chancellor Christopher Szydłowiecki. While in the circle of Coxe's friends there was the nephew of primate John à Lasco, John Laski junior, one of the most interesting and original minds of the Reformation camp in Poland, so closely connected with the history of the Reformation in England (known as Joannes à Lasco) and in Germany.<sup>103</sup> Among Coxe's friends we find the future cardinal Stanislas Hozjusz and Andrew Krzycki's nephew, later the Bishop of Cracow, Andrew Zebrzydowski. So the English humanist moved in the circle of the most outstanding Polish representatives of the Renaissance era.

Leonard Coxe's circle of friends in Cracow joined and animated the cult of Erasmus of Rotterdam and the English guest's rooms at the Jerusalem Bourse became a live centre of Polish Erasmians. In the name of Polish Erasmians Coxe wrote from Cracow on the 28.III.1527, in words full of admiration, to the great humanist of Rotterdam<sup>104</sup>:

"Each day again and again we mention Erasmus, Dear Erasmus, you often spend with us our mornings, with you we eat our dinner, with you we go for our after dinner walk, with you we sit down to our supper and also with you we spend our nights in the most pleasant way. Although such a great distance separates you from us, you are always amidst us and we never part from you... Although you

<sup>102</sup> Nowak - Dłużewski: *op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>103</sup> B. Hall: *John à Lasco. A Pole in Reformation England*, London 1971; O. Bartel: *Jan Łaski (John à Lasco)*, vol. 1, 1499—1556, Warszawa 1955.

<sup>104</sup> P. S. Allen and H. M. Allen [ed.]: *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Rotterodami*, Oxford 1906—1958, no. 1803.

live in Basel, at the same time you are rather often in Cracow, while we — in spite of living in Poland — are at the side of Erasmus”.

Many facts convince us that Coxe to a large degree helped to create in Poland one of Erasmus of Rotterdam cult centres.<sup>105</sup> Under the influence of the English humanist, such outstanding people as John à Lasco, Stanislas Hozjusz, Andrew Krzycki and Andrew Zebrzydowski concentrated on studying the works of Erasmus and engaged in polemics. From among foreign humanists staying in Poland, the Frenchman Anian (Aignan Bourgoin), a pupil of John à Lasco belonged to that circle. Also John Sylvester, the Hungarian humanist and translator of the New Testament, a Cracow scholar and author of the first book on Hungarian grammar, took over the Erasmus cult from Leonard Coxe. It is worth mentioning at this point, that the Cracow pleiad of Hungarian Erasmians created an important framework of Hungarian belles-lettres and historiography.

During Coxe's stay in Poland there existed, in fact, two main Erasmian circles and everything points to the fact that the English humanist influenced both of them, playing the role of liason between them. The first circle, was concentrated around John à Lasco junior an expert on philosophical, religious and literary problems of the Renaissance era. In respect of the nationality of its members this circle was very mixed; among foreigners we find there — apart from the Englishman Leonard Coxe — also: the Frenchman Anian, Hungarian John Antonius and numerous Silesian humanists. The group was characterized by a tendency to criticize, a definite reluctance to scholasticism and the wish to reform the church. It was deeply taken up with humanistic ideas, worshipped Erasmus and searched for the lost books *De Republica* by Cicero. From this group came the greatest representative of the Reformation in Poland John à Lasco and the most outstanding advocate of the Counter Reformation, Cardinal Stanislas Hozjusz.

Coxe was also connected with the second humanistic circle grouped around J. L. Decius, the first patron of the English humanist in Poland. Likewise this circle fervently propagated the ideas of Erasmus of Rotterdam and new learning. It was here that the passionate attacks against scholasticism and warm approval of classical languages studies came from. Hebraism was propagated there by Wencelas Koler, praised in Coxe's speech of 1518, Greek — by George of Legnica and natural history by Anzelm Ephorinus.<sup>106</sup>

In the circle of Polish admirers and enthusiasts of the great Erasmus of Rotterdam, there were supporters of the two combating, at that time,

<sup>105</sup> B a r y c z: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, p. 53.

<sup>106</sup> H. B a r y c z: *Dzieje nauki w Polsce w epoce Odrodzenia (Polish Learning in the Age of Renaissance)*, Warszawa 1957, p. 48.

political camps i.e. of the gentry and of the nobility, led by the Łaskis and the Tomickis respectively. In fervour of the battles over the enforcement of lands and rights, when the views on Polish foreign policy differed basically, the parties involved threw insinuations and accusations at each other. A charge which was brought against Leonard Coxe at the University of Cracow at the very end of his stay in Poland most probably should be looked at against the background of the situation. Namely, Coxe was accused by the wondering poet Erasmus Lycorian, who enrolled at the University of Cracow in 1525, of writing libel and speaking abusively about him on public lectures.<sup>107</sup> Coxe partly admitted the accusations, adding that he acted on the instruction of bishop Andrew Krzycki. The fact that Coxe mentioned bishop Krzycki, a person closely associated with Peter Tomicki and his nobility party, may confirm K. Morawski's assumption, that Coxe might have acted for this side, while Lycorian, most probably served the gentry party represented by the primate John à Lasco.<sup>108</sup> After all the above mentioned incident did not change Coxe's sincere attitude towards Poland, which is proved among others by Coxe's quoted above poem written in 1527.

Leonard Coxe's departure from Poland in 1527, may be, was connected with the journey to the West of his pupil and follower Andrew Zebrzydowski. Zebrzydowski, the nephew of the powerful bishop Andrew Krzycki, later the Bishop of Cracow and a protégé of the vice-chancellor Peter Tomicki, belonged to the warm enthusiasts of Erasmus of Rotterdam. He instructed the following to be inscribed on his tombstone „A Pupil of the Great Erasmus”.<sup>109</sup> A lot confirms the assumption that Zebrzydowski acquired admiration for the author of *The Praise of Folly*, to a large degree from Coxe. In a letter to Erasmus from 28.III.1527, the English humanist recommended Andrew Zebrzydowski as a young man, intelligent and full of enthusiasm for knowledge<sup>110</sup>, adding that in Cracow he read him the work of Erasmus *De duplici Copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo*, which Coxe was also interested in for a long time and commented it in his lectures. He also assured Erasmus of Rotterdam that "as concerns the young man [Zebrzydowski] he is so devoted to you, that he has irreversibly decided to pay you a visit [...] and wishes to see you at last. For him the journey will be an easy undertaking, as

<sup>107</sup> *Acta rectoralia almae universitatis studii Cracoviensis*, vol. 1, Kraków 1873, p. 689.

<sup>108</sup> K. Morawski: *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego (History of the Cracow University)*, vol. 1, Kraków 1900, pp. 211f.

<sup>109</sup> Allen and Allen: *op. cit.*, no 1698.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, no 1803.

he has three rich prebends".<sup>111</sup> As early as on 21.V.1527 Erasmus sent a letter from Basel to Andrew Zebrzydowski in which he mentioned his sincere friendship with bishop Andrew Krzycki:

„Your exceptional, worthy of such an uncle, abilities, have been presented to me in a letter from Leonard Coxe, who is educating your youthful mind". Encouraging Zebrzydowski to cherish humanities with affection, Erasmus added: „There are many reasons which should inflame your heart even more. Firstly, your such great talents tell us to expect a lot from you, to which your teacher Coxe contributed a great deal. And in this way the best material found itself in the hands of the best master".<sup>112</sup>

The correspondence of Erasmus of Rotterdam from March and May 1527 connected with Andrew Zebrzydowski, contains three important facts for Leonard Coxe's biography. Firstly, we find a very high and praising opinion by Erasmus of the English humanist's abilities as a teacher. Secondly, it confirms Coxe's wide connections with the highest Polish dignitaries of that period. It appears, that Coxe wrote his letter to Erasmus on the 28.III.1527 at the request of the chancellor Christopher Szydłowiecki himself, with whom he was also closely connected. Eventually Erasmus's correspondence with Coxe throws some light on the end of the English humanist's stay in Cracow. In the letter to the author of *The Praise of Folly* from 28.III.1527, Coxe wrote that he reads the work of Erasmus *De duplici Copia verborum ac rerum commentarii duo* to Andrew Zebrzydowski and his friends. This most probably occurred at Peter Tomicki's court school where Zebrzydowski was taught and where Coxe most probably lectured on Latin. After finishing the lower school in Piotrkow, Zebrzydowski went to university in Cracow, but he was not studious enough and so moved to Peter Tomicki's court school where — among others, under the influence of Coxe — gave himself with eagerness to classical studies. For such a hypothesis is confirmed by the fact, that Coxe in 1526 became Zebrzydowski's mentor and gave up his lectures at the University of Cracow, although he still remained in the capital of Poland. Evidently Coxe's paper mentioned above, about the education of youth, dedicated to Tomicki, drew the vice-chancellor's attention to the English humanist. Tomicki could have called Coxe to his court entrusting him the care of his relative.<sup>113</sup>

The quoted above letter full of praises of Coxe from Erasmus of Rotterdam to Andrew Zebrzydowski is the last evidence of Coxe's stay in Poland. Zebrzydowski's departure on a humanistic peregrination is most probably connected with the departure from Poland of his English mentor.

<sup>111</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, no 1826.

<sup>113</sup> *S z u m s k a: op. cit.*, p. 64.

Zebrzydowski left for Basel in the midst of 1528 and on the 26.VIII 1528 Erasmus informed Krzycki:

„Your nephew Andrew Zebrzydowski is living with me under the same roof and eats at the same table [...] I show him the way and although he himself tears away, I still rouse him and sometimes educate through conversation. He works intensively and is getting to know literature in both languages. It can therefore be expected that he will return to you educated, like we desire”.<sup>114</sup> So Leonard Coxe's pupil reached his desired aim and met Erasmus the admiration and love for whom he learned in Cracow from the English humanist.

On the other hand Leonard Coxe returned to his country with a large scholarly output and literary and didactic experience earned during his stay in Renaissance Cracow. Perhaps he was the only Englishman in the XVIth century, who tied himself for a longer period with the University of Cracow and played such an important role in the intellectual life in Poland in the age of humanism.

## STRESZCZENIE

Życie i działalność humanisty angielskiego Leonarda Coxe'a stanowią interesujący przyczynek do stosunków kulturalnych angielsko-polskich oraz formowania się ośrodków kultu Erazma z Rotterdamu w latach dwudziestych XVI w.

Przedmiotem artykułu jest działalność Leonarda Coxe'a w Krakowie w latach 1518—1519 oraz 1525—1527. Po naszkicowaniu lat studiów i wcześniejszych peregrynacji humanisty angielskiego autor zajął się szczegółowiej jego rolą w krakowskim środowisku humanistycznym, działalnością na Akademii Krakowskiej, pracą naukową i wydawniczą oraz związkami przyjaźni Coxe'a z najwybitniejszymi pisarzami, uczonymi i dyplomatami polskimi czasów Zygmunta I (J. L. Decjusz, Andrzej Krzycki, Stanisław Hozjusz, Jan Łaski, Andrzej Zebrzydowski i in.). Krakowskie grono przyjaciół humanisty angielskiego przenikał kult Erazma z Rotterdamu i wiele wskazuje na to, że Coxe przyczynił się w poważnym stopniu do większego jeszcze ożywienia kultu autora *Pochwały głupoty* w stolicy Polski.

Znaczna część pracy została poświęcona omówieniu pochwalnej mowy Coxe'a na cześć Akademii Krakowskiej, wygłoszonej w Krakowie w 1518 r. i w tymże roku ogłoszonej tam drukiem. Mowa ta stanowi bardzo wysoką ocenę poziomu naukowego Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego i zawiera dosyć szczegółową charakterystykę uprawianych tam dyscyplin wiedzy.

<sup>114</sup> Allen and Allen: *op. cit.*, no 2030.

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Жизнь и деятельность английского гуманиста Леонарда Кокса может служить интересным примером англо-польских культурных отношений и формирования центров культа Эразма Роттердамского в 20-ых годах XVI в.

Предметом настоящей статьи является деятельность Леонарда Кокса в Кракове в 1518—1519 и в 1525—1527 годах. После краткого рассмотрения периода учебы и ранних странствований английского гуманиста, автор подробно анализирует роль, которую играл Л. Кокс в жизни передового общества Кракова, его научную и издательскую деятельность в Краковском университете. Кроме того, автор подробно рассказывает о дружеских связях Кокса с выдающимися польскими писателями, учеными и дипломатами времен короля Зигмунта I (Я. Л. Децьюш, А. Кшицки, С. Хозьюш, Я. Ласки, А. Зебжидовски и др.).

Круг краковских друзей английского гуманиста находился под сильным влиянием культа Эразма Роттердамского; многие факты свидетельствуют о том, что Кокс в большой степени способствовал распространению культа автора „Похвала глупости” в столице Польши.

Большая часть работы посвящена обсуждению похвальной речи Кокса, произнесенной им в честь Краковской Академии в 1518 году, которая была в этом же году опубликована. В речи дается высокая оценка научному уровню Краковской Академии, кроме того в ней содержится довольно подробная характеристика имеющихся в ней отраслей науки.