

Kazimierz Szafraniec

600th Anniversary of Jasna Góra

Collectanea Theologica 48/Fasciculus specialis, 175-191

1978

Artykuł został zdigitalizowany i opracowany do udostępnienia w internecie przez Muzeum Historii Polski w ramach prac podejmowanych na rzecz zapewnienia otwartego, powszechnego i trwałego dostępu do polskiego dorobku naukowego i kulturalnego. Artykuł jest umieszczony w kolekcji cyfrowej bazhum.muzhp.pl, gromadzącej zawartość polskich czasopism humanistycznych i społecznych.

Tekst jest udostępniony do wykorzystania w ramach dozwolonego użytku.

KAZIMIERZ SZAFRANIEC OSPE, ŻARKI

600th ANNIVERSARY OF JASNA GÓRA

The Jasna Góra monastery in Częstochowa is famous primarily for the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa, a treasure of Polish religious culture for at least four centuries. Jasna Góra has become a part of the religious life of the country, and it is the heart of the Catholic Church in Poland wherein Our Lady rules with love.

As the approaching 600th anniversary of Jasna Góra evokes many questions concerning the history of the Monastery, let us try to answer some of them in light of recent research, taking into account the historical conditions of past periods.

1. Foudation of Jasna Góra: Conditions and Motives

In 1382, Ladislas O p o l c z y k („Ruski” or „the Ruthenian”), Duke of Opole, founded a Monastery of the Order of St. Paul the Hermit on the hill of Stara Częstochowa. At the present site of Jasna Góra (the name already appeared in documents for the first time in 1388¹) there was a village called Stara Częstochowa with a wooden parish church dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. To the North lay the village of Częstochówka, the present Wieluń market square and its environs. On the Warta River — near the vicinity of the present church of St. Sigismund — was a chapel affiliated with the parish church in Stara Częstochowa; and around this Chapel stretched the town of Częstochowa.²

On June 22, 1382, in Stara Częstochowa, in the presence of Duke Ladislas, Częstochowa's parish-priest, Father Henryk Biel of Bleszno resigned from the parish church, transferring all his rights to the prior general of the Order of St. Paul, and the Brothers of the Monastery. And as a sign of his voluntary resignation he gave the

¹ *Zbiór dokumentów zakonu oo. paulinów w Polsce, z. 1: 1328—1464* (Collection of documents of the Order of St. Paul the Hermit in Poland, no. 1: 1328—1464), publisher J. Fijałek, Kraków 1938, no. 29, p. 58—59 (in further references: ZD).

² S. Krakowski, *Stara Częstochowa. Studia nad genezą, ustrojem i strukturą ludnościową i gospodarczą Częstochowy (1220—1655)* (Old Częstochowa. Studies of the development, systems and population and economic structure of Częstochowa between 1220 and 1655), Częstochowa 1948, p. 24—33.

church keys to Brother George, the prior of the Pauline monastery of St. Lawrence (near Buda, Hungary). Moreover, the parish-priest publicly and explicitly stated that in connection with his resignation and transfer he had received appropriate compensation and satisfaction. It is also known that in return for his resignation he became a canon in Gniezno and Kraków. The resignation and transfer documents were written by Peter the Duke's Scribe, and adorned with eight seals hanging on parchment strips.³

On August 9, 1382, in the town of Częstochowa, Duke Ladislas' chancellor Nicholas Ticzkonis, a Wrocław curator, issued two documents in which the Duke states the full agreement of Kraków's Bishop John of Radliczyce, ("Radlica") for the construction of a monastery, and the endowment of the Order with two villages (i.e. Stara Częstochowa and Krowodrza); an iron smelting works with a pond and farm adjoining the monastery; tithes in money, grain, crops, and other rights, freeing the Order from certain duties. In a document issued on January 19, 1385 in the town of Częstochowa by Chancellor Nicholas, the Duke introduced slight changes and added the village of Grabowa to the Monastery's foundation.⁴

Sixteen members of the Order of St. Paul the Hermit from Nosztre (Márianosztra) in Hungary⁵ arrived in Częstochowa to establish before the elapse of the 14th century a new Polish Province⁶ with the motherhouse and seat of the provincial in Jasna Góra.

Who initiated the establishment of the Monastery? In light of the 14th century it appears that those responsible for initiating this project were Duke Ladislas and the Prior General of St. Paul's Order, Nicholas III.

The documents quoted above mention only the Duke as its founder. To his Pauline contemporaries he was known as „our father from Poland”, and the Jasna Góra Monastery was „his Polish Cloister”.⁷ An author mentions that Duke Ladislaus was considered „illustrious in life”;⁸ for the 16th century Risinius he was a man of prudence and generosity.⁹ Father Mikołaj Wilkowiecko no-

³ ZD no. 12, p. 21—23.

⁴ ZD no. 13 and 14, p. 23—30, and no. 18, p. 35—38.

⁵ E. Kisbán, *A magyar Pálosrend története*, vol. 1, Budapest 1937, p. 94.

⁶ ZD no. 40 and 41, p. 80—84.

⁷ „Litere ladislai ducis patris nostri de polonia super donacione cuiusdam terre monasterio suo de polonia”: written in the 14th century on the reverse side of the foundation document of Jasna Góra of August 9, 1382 (ZD no. 13, s. 24 v. 39—40).

⁸ *Opis przeniesienia obrazu Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej z Jerozolimy na Jasną Górę* (Description of how the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa was moved from Jerusalem to Jasna Góra), published by S. Szafrańiec, *Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne* 1(1960) no. 2, p. 201 (in further references: OP).

⁹ P. Risinius, *Historia pulchra et stupendis Miraculis referta Imaginis Mariae, quom et unde in Clarum Montem Czanstochowiae et Olsztyn advenerit*, Kraków 1523, p. 16.

tes that he was "a wise, noble, and generous Duke".¹⁰ One hundred years, later, Father Amroży N i e s z p o r k o w i c titled him without hesitancy as „a holy man”,¹¹ and one of the members of the Order in the 18th century saw in him a "very paternal founder".¹²

Ladislav O p o l c z y k was linked to the Angevin dynasty (then ruling Hungary) by particularly strong bonds: first of all he was a blood relation of the royal family of Louis the Great; he was a member of the King's court since 1359 and became his favorite plenipotentiary, for which he received large estates. He was held in high esteem in both Poland and Hungary.

In 1367, the King named him "palatine" of the Kingdom of Hungary and "casellan" of Temesvar; he also received the estates of Nagy Ugrócz, Pászt, Kalacsna, and especially Kis-Tapolcsany.

In 1370, the King in gratitude for the help O p o l c z y k rendered in winning the Polish throne gave him, a wide belt of border land neighboring on the Opole principality. This Wieluń region, together with the castles built along the Silesian border by King Casimir the Great of Poland, included Olsztyn, Bobolice, Krzepice, and Brzeźnica. From then on, this land was to become the feudal demesne of the Duke of Opole with the right of coinage in Wieluń. In this area was found the village of Stara Częstochowa and the town of Częstochowa.

In exchange for the estates in Hungary, King Louis in a document issued on October 10, 1372 named the Duke of Opole the governor of Red Russia. Thus the Duke did not become a sovereign ruler, but only a more dignified royal official. Opolczyk ruled Red Russia for six years. He was a governor in Poland from December 1377 to September 1378, although Queen Elizabeth was formally the Regent. Toward the end of 1378, in lieu of Red Russia, Opolczyk received from Louis the lands of Dobrzyń and Bydgoszcz.¹³ He was particularly generous to the King's mother, Elizabeth Łokietek.¹⁴

Representing the church in the agreement to erect the Monastery in Stara Częstochowa was the Bishop of Kraków, John of Radliczy-

¹⁰ *Historia o obrazie w Częstochowie Panny Maryey i o cudach rozmaitych tej wielkiej Tablice* (History of the picture of the Virgin Mary in Częstochowa and its various miracles), Kraków around 1568, p. 12.

¹¹ *Odrobiny stołu królewskiego albo historia o cudownym obrazie Naśw. Panny Maryey Częstochowskiej* (Remains of the royal table of the history of the miraculous picture of the Holy Virgin in Częstochowa, Kraków 1683, p. 36.

¹² „Privilegium a piissimo fundatore Vladislao Duce Opoliensi”: written on the reverse side of the foundation document of August 9, 1382 (ZD no. 14, p. 29, v. 22).

¹³ J. Dąbrowski, *Ostatnie lata Ludwika Wielkiego 1370—1382* (The last years of Louis the Great 1370—1382), Kraków 1918, s. 42—44, 290—292, 309—312, 381—382.

¹⁴ J. Dąbrowski, *Elżbieta Łokietkówna* (Elizabeth Łokietek), printed in: *Rozprawy Akademii Umiejętności. Wydział historyczno-filozoficzny*, vol. 57, Kraków 1914, p. 324, 328.

ce. For several years he functioned as a physician in King Louis' court. As a favorite of the King he was presented in 1380 with the post of chancellor of the Kingdom of Poland; moreover he was made both canon and archdeacon of the Cracow-Cathedral. In a document dated February 5, 1382, he was already mentioned as Bishop elect of Kraków and in that year he was consecrated by the archbishop of Gniezno with papal confirmation.¹⁵

The Order of St. Paul the Hermit grew rapidly in the 14th century in Hungary. A report by archbishop of Kalocsa in 1327 on the status of the Order was very favorable. There were 60 Pauline monasteries reported, with 900 monks. In each monastery there were no less than 15 persons; the number fluctuated between 20 and 60. In the main cloister of the St. Lawrence (the residence of the prior general) near the town of Buda, there were some 300 members in the community. The entire Order was headed by the prior general, who in the years 1381—1393 was Nicholas III.¹⁶

It was his decision as to whether or not to accept a new foundation for the Order.¹⁷ It was his duty to seek the acceptance of the Holy See, and to gain the benevolence of Dukes and Kings. He also chose the people for new places. In the resignation document held by Father Henryk Biel, the parish-priest of Częstochowa, it is clearly stated that in the prior general's name the keys to the church were given to brother George (or Gregory), the prior of St. Lawrence monastery.

King Louis of Hungary established monasteries of the Order of St. Paul: St. Mary's in Nosztre (Márianosztra, 1352); St. Mary's in Remete (near Máramaros, 1363); Sts. Mary's and Catherine's in Gönc (1371); St. Mary's in Máriavölgy (1377) and the Monastery of St. Paul the Hermit in the town of Buda (1382). He also was the founder of many other monasteries. He especially liked and visited the monasteries in: Márianosztra, Máriavölgy, Diósgyőr and the St. Lawrence monastery. Through his recommendation Pope Urban V gave approbation to the Order of St Paul and on March 14, 1368 approved the adoption of the Rule of St. Augustine granted by Pope John XXII on November 16, 1328; they were also indebted to him for the relics of St. Paul the Hermit which were brought from Venice to Buda in 1381. Grateful for his protection, foundations, and grants

¹⁵ A. Strzelecka, *Jan z Radliczyc* (Jan of Radliczyce), printed in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 10, Wrocław—Warszawa—Kraków 1962—1964, p. 469—472.

¹⁶ E. Kisbán, *op. cit.*, s. 83—85, 104.

¹⁷ G. Gengijesinus (Gyöngyösi), *Incipiunt declarationes constitutionum ordinis fratrum heremitarum s. Pauli primi heremitae* (Roma around 1520), rubrica 53; *idem*, *Incipit directorium singulorum fratrum officialium ordinis s. Pauli primi heremitaie sub regula beati Augustini militantium* (Roma around 1520), p. 7—8.

they introduced a "special anniversary"¹⁸ for „King Louis, his parents, his wife and daughters on the day of the martyrs Protus and Hyacinth", (September 11, the date of his death).

The particular close relationship between the King and the Order created a number of occasions for Duke Ladislas' personal contacts with them. The sparse information of Ladislas' youth has led Rev. Leon Kara to hypothesize that the future duke of Opole was educated in the special school for the magnats („Collegium Nobilium") conducted by the Pauline Fathers at the Nosztre Monastery in Hungary. Years later the Duke brought over a group of 16 monks from this monastery to Częstochowa and a group of 12 monks to Mochów near Głogówek.^{18a}

The Nosztre Monastery (Márianosztra), the foundation of Louis the Great in 1352, was one of the most, distinguished Hungarian monasteries and was highly prized for its architecture. The Nosztre Monastery consisted of two buildings inhabited by the Pauline Fathers and the palace where "Collegium Nobilium" for the royal and ducal sons was located. The endowment of the monastery was sufficient for the maintenance of 300 monks.^{18b}

The particular didactic regulations preserved in the "Directorium" of Pauline Fathers has a characteristic chapter entitled „How to teach the sons of kings and dukes".^{18c} Such a program pointed out the major qualities of the "Collegium Nobilium" educational system. There are the numerous examples: how to develop physical skill in a young man; how to develop temperance in eating and drinking as well as moderation and dignity of dressing. How to develop moral Christian principles so that they may pervade one's exercise of authority and milieu. It takes into consideration not only archery, equitation, javelin casting, hunting, but also learning foreign languages, especially Hungarian, Italian and Bohemian. It orders key lectures on grammar, rhetoric, dialectics, and exhorts the study of philosophy.

¹⁸ G. Gengijesinus, *Incipiunt declarationes, op. cit.*, rubrica 69.

^{18a} L. Kara, *Historie der Kirche und der Stadt Oberglogau und aus der Geschichte des Klosters und der Parochie Wiese Pauliner* (circa 1972). The typescript has been preserved at Kuria Diecezjalna in Opole, p. 12—13. With the information about the group of 16 Pauline Fathers, Ladislas Duke of Opole brought over to Częstochowa the local Jasna Góra Monastery tradition harmonizes well, being alive in the XVII-th century which has proclaimed, that the primary endowment has been sufficient for the maintenance of only 16 Pauline monks: *Acta conventus Clari Montis Częstochoviensis*, Archiwum Jasnogórskie sygn. 197 p. 1. (continued: AJ).

^{18b} *Documenta artis Paulinorum*, vol. 2, ed. B. Gyéressy, Budapest 1976, p. 99.

^{18c} G. Gengijesinus, *Incipit directorium, op. cit.*, fol. 31—33: „Quomodo regum et principum filii sunt instruendi. Capitulum XVI".

The equestrian seal of Ladislas Duke of Opole on the Act of Foundation of the Jasna Góra Monastery from the 9th of August 1382, figures a knight standing in stirrups on a galloping horse, holding up the sword in his right hand with the face twined toward a spectator. A dog is portrayed as gaining on the galloping horse.^{18d}

On the basis of this seal — it is possible to conjecture that Ladislas Duke of Opole liked and excelled in horsemanship and hunting.

Nothing certain, however is known as to whether Louis personally ordered or wished a Monastery to be erected in Częstochowa. The information quoted by Długosz in this case is rather vague¹⁹ and no confirmation can be found in the Foundations Documents of Jasna Góra, or the Holy Trinity Monastery near Głogówek. Apart from these two, the Duke also established a monastery of the Order in Wieluń, and in all likelihood the monastery in Wieruszów.

It is worth emphasizing here, the fact that the Duke was very close to the religious, and within the circles of his immediate family. One of his brothers, Henry was a cleric at the Emperor's court; and out of four sisters three were Nuns: Kunegunda was a Poor Clare in Old Buda, Elizabeth a Choir Nun in Trzebnica, and Anna a Poor Clare in Wrocław. Of the Duke's four daughters from his first marriage, two were Nuns: Agnes a Poor Clare in Stary Sącz, and Kinga a Poor Clare in Old Buda. His nephew John, named „Kropi-*di*ło” held sever episcopal posts in Poland; and a niece, Anna, was a Choir-nun at Trzebnica where in 1428 she was elected abbess.²⁰

The last years of the Duke's life throws a characteristic light on him. Lost in his hopes and ambitions, deserted by everyone and poor, he spent his last days managing his small estates, and to avoid bankruptcy sold what was left of his possessions and thinking of his salvation, presented grants to the Church or monasteries.²¹ It should be noted that John Długosz a rather harsh opinion of the duke's favorite nephew John, the Duke of Opole, Bishop of Poznań, Włocławek, nominee of the Archbishop of Gniezno, has been mitigated by recent scholarship. John led a consistent battle with the Teutonic Knights to retain in whole the Włocławek diocese and its

^{18d} ZD no. 13 p. 24 v. 22—35; the photography of the seal: Z. Rozanow, E. Smulikowska, *Skarby kultury na Jasnej Górze* (The cultural heritage of Jasna Góra), Warszawa 1974, p. 128.

¹⁹ K. Pieradzka, *Fundacja klasztoru jasnogórskiego w Częstochowie w 1382 r.* (The Foundation of the Jasna Góra cloister in Częstochowa in 1382), Kraków 1939, p. 16—18.

²⁰ W'. Dworzaczek, *Genealogia. Tablice* (Genealogy. Tables), Warszawa 1959, table 9.

²¹ Z. Boras, *Książęta piastowscy Śląska* (The Piast Dukes of Silesia), Katowice 1975, p. 267.

materialistic state. He supported higher education for the clergy; he finished the erection of the cathedral in 1411; during his life he generously supported the Dominicans. Two months before his death, he gave the town 600 marks to rebuild Opole from wooden structures to brick structures. Moreover, he left 500 marks for the erection of a vast new hospital with two Chapels, and a separate dowry fund for the very poor and orphaned townswomen of Opole.²²

The Order of St. Paul worked very closely with the Duke in establishing Jasna Góra. A document²³ (dated January 19, 1385) gives an account of the Order's persistent requests to create better facilities for the monastery verifies this relationship. And when the defeated Duke lost his power and lands, they quickly appeared before the royal chancellery of Ladislas Jagiello in Kraków, where they received higher grants²⁴ for the monastery. This was the so-called "second foundation" of Jasna Góra. After the King's death, Brother Andrew, the prior of Jasna Góra, appeared before Bishop Zbigniew in Kraków on May 11, 1436, and asked „humbly and forcefully”²⁵ for the confirmation of the privileges granted by the deceased monarch.

What were the motives for the foundation? The answer to this question can be found in the Foundation's documents of Duke Ladislas. They were: the salvation of soul, the souls of his ancestors, and the desire to venerate the Most Holy Virgin Mary.

The salvation motive is very clearly defined in the document dated January 19, 1385, hence it should not be treated as merely a stereotype. It is difficult to state, whether there was any connection between the erection of the Monastery and the Duke's contrition after the lifting of a church excommunication in 1381.

In the estates of the Płock bishopric, Duke Ladislas illegally collected taxes from the villagers, and his officials abused the law. Because of this, Bishop Dobiesław excommunicated the duke. When during the Easter season, a priest refused to give him the Holy Sacraments, the Duke humbled himself before John the Archbishop of Gniezno, who then lifted the Church penalty (before May 13, 1381). In the presence of Dobiesław Bishop of Płock, Zbilut Bishop of Włocławek, and many noblemen, the Duke promised to remove the heavy taxes put on the villagers and compensate for their losses.²⁶

²² A. Liedtke, *Jan zwany „Kropidło”* (Jan named „Kropidło”), printed in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 10, *op. cit.*, p. 436—438.

²³ ZD no. 18, p. 36, v. 35—36.41; p. 37, v. 38.40—41.

²⁴ ZD no. 33, p. 64—67.

²⁵ ZD no. 109, p. 205, v. 50.

²⁶ *Jana z Czarnkowa Kronika Polska: 1333—1382* (Jan of Czarnków's Polish Chronicle: 1333—1382), prepared by J. Szlachetowski, printed in: *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, publisher A. Bielowski, vol. 2, Lwów 1872, p. 691—692.

The motive or desire to venerate Our Lady. The title could have been suggested by the parish church in Stara Częstochowa, or it could have been chosen by the Pauline Order, who have cultivated the cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary, it could have been chosen by the Duke himself. In all probability the title was the result of mutual understanding between the founder and the Order. But the fact remains, that in both foundation documents of August 9, 1382 the monastery bears the title (of the Blessed Virgin Mary), the monastery of St. Mary,²⁷ as it was erected in her honor.²⁸

It is worth mentioning here, that the Duke in the Foundation's document of the Pauline Order Monastery in Silesia specified clearly that they were under obligation to say one Mass each day to the Virgin Mary for the salvation of his soul and those of his ancestors.²⁹

The motive of Our Lady was particularly emphasized by the Duke's gift: the picture of the Mother of God.

The Foundation documents do not mention the picture. Characteristically in content, the document of October 30, 1388 seems to point to a Marian cult which had already existed then on Jasna Góra. A cleric, John, the son of Mathew Mandrys, together with his step-mother Gertruda, resold to Jakub, the prior of Jasna Góra and the entire Monastery of St. Paul the farmlands and fields spreading onto the area of the iron smelting works near the town of Częstochowa. They specified that this sale is not being done for profit alone, but to save the soul of their father Mathew Mandrys and his legal children, and to honor the glorious Virgin Mary.³⁰ Let us also take note here, that the same two motives — the salvation and the Marian cult exist here as they do in the Foundation documents of the Monastery.

The earliest information concerning the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa can be found in *Translacio tabule*, that is, the first „mythical” description of the Foundation of Jasna Góra. In 1428, an unknown author compiled a description of the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa being transferred from Jerusalem to Jasna Góra.³¹ According to him it is painted on the table top used by the Virgin Mary; the painting itself had been the work of St. Luke the Evangelist. The duke for spiritual reasons vowed that after establishing and furnishing a magnificent monastery, would bring the picture to Jasna Góra. He found the picture in the Belz castle in Red Russia, and the author claims that five of the duke's noblemen witnessed the event.

²⁷ ZD no. 13, p. 26, v. 22.30; no. 14, p. 30, v. 15.

²⁸ ZD no. 14, p. 30, v. 6.

²⁹ Document from January 20, 1388: ZD no. 28, p. 57, v. 5—6.

³⁰ ZD no. 29, p. 59, v. 4—6.

³¹ See note 8.

The author of *Translacio* does not mention the destruction of the picture which took place in 1430. He praises Ladislas Jagiełło as the second founder of Jasna Góra, which he describes as a place of pilgrimages and indulgences. Hence we may assume that he wrote his story around 1428, and the place of this story in the code would also acknowledge this fact.

The author of *Translacio* adopted a common legend of those times and linked it with Jasna Góra. The story's motives could have been taken from a manuscript about the miracles of the Mother of God, copied before 1417 by Brother Jakub of Żagań.³² The manuscript mentions the existence of a miraculous picture of the Mother of God in Constantinople, which unveiled itself every Friday evening. There is also mention of the miraculous picture of St. Luke the Evangelist. The picture was said to have been painted by Luke at the request of the Apostles. At a certain moment, St. Luke fell into a daze and the picture of Our Lady miraculously came into existence. After the Ascension, the picture was taken to the Monastery of the Blessed Virgin in the Temple. The Lateran clergy urged Pope Sergius to have the picture removed to the Lateran. He however, was cautioned by Heaven not to do so. The picture moved itself to a convent of nuns and the pope in obedience to a divine mandate gave them a rich grant.

In describing the life of Kraków's Bishop John of Radliczyce, Długosz steadfastly claims that Ladislas Opolczyk by chance discovered the picture in Russia and donated it to the Monastery in Jasna Góra.³³

Following the *Translacio tabule*, the legendary history of the picture is reported with small changes by a printed prayer sheet in German dating from the first decade of the 16th century.³⁴ A detailed description is offered ten years later by Risinius who also gives the date of the icon's placement in Jasna Góra: August 31, 1384,³⁵ and moreover stresses — to quote the translation of Father Mikołaj Wilkowiecko — „this history was told by the Duke himself and so recorded”.³⁶

³² *Secuntur miracula beate Virginis. Per manus fratris Jacobi de Sagano*, AJ library manuscripts marked II-17 col. 104—104—vo.

³³ J. Długosz, *Catalogus episcoporum Cracoviensium*, in: *Opera omnia*, published by Al. Przeździecki, vol. 1, Kraków 1887, p. 419.

³⁴ J. Pirożyński, *Najstarszy zachowany, drukowany przekaz legendy o obrazie Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej* (The oldest existing printed version of the legend of the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa), *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej* 23(1973) no. 1/2, p. 151—165.

³⁵ P. Risinius, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

³⁶ *Historia*, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

³⁷ ZD no. 87, p. 160—161; no. 95, p. 174—175; no 96, p. 175—17k; see OP p. 204.

From July 1425, Jasna Góra is mentioned as a place to which pilgrims went seeking and under certain conditions receiving indulgences.³⁷ The rapid development of the Marian Shrine by the second decade of the fifteenth century is confirmed by the robbery of April 16, 1430 perpetrated by the impoverished nobles James Nadobny, John Kuropatwa and Fedko Korybutowicz, Duke of Russia.³⁸

The picture was stripped of the jewels donated by pilgrims, but later put together in Cracow by painters who did not use the "Greek" technique of painting but Russian.³⁹ The bottom of the painting was treated as a relic, because the general belief was that it had been a part of the table used by the Virgin Mary. Under the present canvas are holes made by previous nails, used to attach the precious jewels to the holy icon. The two slashes on the face of the Madonna were painted to visualize forever the profanation suffered by the picture. The figure of the Mother of God and the Infant Jesus recall the old *Hodegetria* icon destroyed in 1430.

Cicero claims that gestures are an expression of the body. The infant Jesus holds in his left hand the Gospel; his right hand is lifted pointing upwards; the small fingers and thumb are bent, the index and middle fingers point upwards. That is the gesture of a speaker; a gesture well known as classical ancient art, which was applied by Christian iconography⁴⁰ in ancient times and commonly used in the icons. The infant Jesus is the Son of the Father, His Word. In the Epistle to the Hebrews is written: „God, who once spoke many times to our fathers in various ways through the prophets, in these times speaks to us through His Son”.⁴¹

The Middle Ages in their own way surrounded the picture of Częstochowa and Jasna Góra with a legend, that was taken up by future generations and altered. The 20th century, through its historians and art scholars is creating a totally different and interesting edition of that legend.

For example, Ewa Śnieżyńska-Stolot claims that "the Infant is blessing characters not shown". From a description of the Visitation carried out by Jerzy Cardinal Radziwiłł, the Bishop of Cracow, in 1593 she assumes that the Madonna was kept in a closed triptych, the side panels of which were adorned by the paintings of St. Barbara and St. Catherine. She believes that the word *tabula*

³⁸ J. Długosz, *Historiae Polonicae*, vol. 4, in: *Opera omnia*, published by Al. Przeździecki, vol. 13, Kraków 1877, p. 399—400.

³⁹ P. Risinius, *op. cit.*, 2.25; see R. Kozłowski, *Historia obrazu jasno-górskiego w świetle badań technologicznych i artystyczno-formalnych*, (The history of the Jasna Góra picture in the light of technological, and artistic and formal research), *Roczniki Humanistyczne. Historia sztuki*, 20(1972) no. 5, p. 5—46.

⁴⁰ E. Josi, *Gesti*, in: *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, vol. 6, Firenze 1951, col. 220—221.

⁴¹ Hbr. 1,1—2.

means the altar, and that the monastery in Częstochowa was merely an affiliate of St. Lawrence's monastery near Old Buda.⁴²

In fact the gesture of the Infant Jesus is that of a speaker. In the description of Bishop Rądziwiłł's visit to Jasna Góra there is mention of an altar piece in which three pictures were kept: the Blessed Virgin, St. Barbara, and St. Catherine. The picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa was kept behind the central panel showing the Blessed Virgin. The existing pictures of the two saints dating from the end of the 16th century are 54.5 by 90 cm in size. Their characteristic style recalls the cordovans donated by Cardinal Bolognetti in 1585. A comparison of the visitation description provided by Rądziwiłł and another report made by Reszka in 1585 allow us to assume that the mentioned altar piece was made between 1585 and 1593. Hence, Nadobny, Kuropatwa, and Korybutowicz in 1430 did not have to toil in breaking any triptych. In the Latin vernacular used in Częstochowa, *tabula* means the bottom of the picture, and *imago* means the picture.

The Częstochowa monastery from then on became the residence of the Polish provincial. The particular cloisters of the Polish Province and Jasna Góra were ruled by the prior general, whose residence was in the Monastery of St. Lawrence in Buda, Hungary. At no period in history, however, was Jasna Góra a branch of any Hungarian Monastery.

Krystyna Pieradzka⁴³ thinks it more likely that King Louis of Hungary, comparing his donations to Maria-Zell and Aachen sent the picture to Częstochowa, thus giving his royal blessing to the new monastery of the Order of St. Paul. A rather farfetched theory, which in all sources concerning Jasna Góra has no backing. Franciszek Kotula⁴⁴ explains „A short description of the history of the ancient picture... to 1820" as „the title page of the oldest publication containing the history of the miraculous picture of Jasna Góra". The first publication concerning the picture in Częstochowa appeared at the beginning of the 16th century.

A characterization of the founder himself is extremely difficult, from a psychological point of view. Our notions concerning country, nationality, and Poland do not even slightly coincide with his beliefs. Both his policies and his relationship linked him with King Louis. In politics he was elegant, able and patient. He was no worse than many other dukes of his times, but definitely more religious, diligent and a better ruler.

⁴² E. Śnieżyńska-Stolot, *Geneza, styl i historia obrazu Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej* (The creation, style and history of the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa), in: *Folia historiae artium*, vol. 9, Kraków 1973, p. 8, 15, 42.

⁴³ *Op. cit.*, p. 66.

⁴⁴ *O starym domu Czarnej Madonny* (On the old home of the Black Madonna), *Nasza Przeszłość* 33(1970) il. 20.

The chasuble he was said to have donated — was a gift of the Hungarian family of Drugeth Homonnay in second decade of the 16th century, and was not his gift. Also, Jasna Góra has no rich donation from the Blessed Queen Jadwiga, which Strzelecka and Stabińska⁴⁵ stubbornly claim she made.

2. The Development and Historical Significance of Jasna Góra: Factors and Tasks

In the six centuries of the life of Jasna Góra, particularly three traits stand out: the community of the Order of St. Paul, the Shrine of the Blessed Virgin, and the fortress of Mary. Chronologically, the first trait is the starting point; the third existed only at certain periods due to existing political conditions; the second trait outlined the development of Jasna Góra, and still does maps out the pastoral and social tasks of the cloister.

The Order of St. Paul the Hermit was established in Hungary in the middle of the 13th century. The lifestyle initially was characterized by an isolated existence behind cloistered walls. The daily schedule was defined by the Mass and breviary. In the first half of the 16th century, the onslaught of the Turkish army divided the Hungarian state, and as a result dozens of the Order's monasteries were destroyed. In the 1640's, the Hungarian province numbered 12 cloisters and no more than 60 friars, while the Polish province in the same period had 13 cloisters and some 200 members.⁴⁶ The real trend-setting in the life of the Order was taken over by the Polish province, or to be more precise — Jasna Góra which then became the Order's main monastery and mother house. In fact it then had as many friars as the entire Hungarian province.

Already in the 15th century, the Polish members of the Order took on parochial responsibilities. In the next century, cooperation in the struggle against the Reformation brought them into the forefront of soul-saving tasks, and made it necessary for them to have suitable intellectual preparation. As the result of orders received after visitations from the Holy See in the years 1577, 1585, 1593, 1609, and 1635, as well as the efforts of Polish provincials and

⁴⁵ A. Strzelecka, *Jadwiga Andegaweńska, Anjou, królowa Polski* (Jadwiga Anjou, Queen of Poland), in: *Polski słownik biograficzny*, vol. 10, *op. cit.*, p. 296; J. Stabińska, *Królowa Jadwiga* (Queen Jadwiga), edition II, Kraków 1975, p. 125. See Z. Rozanow, E. Smulikowska, *Skarby kultury na Jasnej Górze* (Cultural treasures at Jasna Góra), Warszawa 1974, p. 94.

⁴⁶ *Acta ordinis generalia*, vol. 1, p. 135, Budapest, Egyetemi Könyvtár, sign AB. 154.

a few intellectual friars, the Order began creating its own schools of learning, which provided courses in philosophy and Catholic theology. These legal and organizational endeavors were crowned when pope Clement X granted by his bull *Ex iniuncto nobis* (April 3, 1671) the Pauline Prior General the right to confer university degrees. In Jasna Góra, courses in rhetorics, philosophy and moral theology were available, while lectures in dogmatic theology were provided mainly by the Monastery in Cracow.

Noteworthy evidences of the spirited life of the Order of St. Paul during the 17th and the 18th exist very day at Jasna Góra, most of the architecture of the Monastery, rich archives, large music archives, the library with a fine old-print division, the building of the former pharmacy, the former printing house, works turned out by the painters', the carpenter's, the goldsmith's and the embroidery workshops of the monastery.⁴⁷

The partitions of Poland, and especially the dissolutions of religious houses after the January Uprising (1863) totally dispersed the Jasna Góra community, which was successfully reorganized only after the country regained its independence in 1918. In the interwar period, and after World War II the Order of St. Paul the Hermit in Poland opened religious foundations both at home and abroad and increased its total membership. The Paulines as many other orders, faced the difficulty of adapting their lifestyle, once enclosed in solitude, to the modern needs of the pilgrim ministry at Jasna Góra.

The growth of the Shrine of Our Lady at Jasna Góra should be seen in the vein of charisma, particularly the charisma of giving. It all began with the founder Duke who financed the monastery and donated the holy icon of the Mother of God. His example was followed by others — in most cases anonymous donors,⁴⁸ who were also led by the same two motives: the salvation of their souls and their devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. The foundations concerned both the place and ways of cult: altar pieces, chapels, organs, entrance gate, the art of Marian hymnody (the Office of the Imma-

⁴⁷ See K. Szafraniec, *Przeor Kordecki, w trzechsetlecie zgonu: 1673—1973* (Prior Kordecki on the 300th anniversary of his death: 1673—1973), *Ateneum Kapłańskie* 80(1973) p. 284—302; H. Czerwień, *Szkoła paulińska* (The Order of St. Paul's school), in: *Dzieje teologii katolickiej w Polsce*, vol. 2, part II, Lublin 1975, s. 509—548; J. H. Zbudniewek, *Katalog domów i rezydencji polskiej prowincji paulinów* (Catalog of houses and residences of the Polish province of the Order of St. Paul), *Nasza Przeszłość* 31(1969) p. 181—228; S. Szafraniec, *Konwent paulinów jasnogórskich 1382—1864* (Convent of the Order of St. Paul at Jasna Góra 1382—1864), Roma 1966.

⁴⁸ See S. Szafraniec, *Jasna Góra. Studium z dziejów kultu Matki Boskiej Częstochowskiej* (Jasna Góra. Study into the history of the cult of Our Lady of Częstochowa), in: *Sacrum Poloniae Millennium*, vol. 4, Roma 1957, p. 9—67; Z. Rozanow, E. Smulikowska, *Skarby kultury na Jasnej Górze* (Cultural treasures at Jasna Góra), Warszawa 1974.

culate Conception, the Litany of Loretto), the celebration of Mass and votive lights.

Even before 1430, Jasna Góra was the place of pilgrimages.⁴⁹ Groups of pilgrims from afar visited Jasna Góra to beg the Mother of God for grace and miracles at Her shrine. The friars increased this already great devotion to Mary by introducing reverence services, during which — from the middle of the 16th century — a vocal and instrumental choir performed, sermons were preached, with the assurance that there existed possibilities of receiving indulgences which only the "holy site" could give. This great devotion and imagination have always been concentrated especially on the adorning of the picture of Our Lady and the altar, on which the picture is kept. The presence of special royal symbols as noteworthy: the royal crown, sceptre, the orb, the royal dress, the throne, throne room, royal bugle call, and the tributary scroll. Already in the beginning of the 16th century, in the first etching of the picture there is a crown on the head of the Mother of God. Toward the end of that century were some exaggerations which brought words of reproach from George Cardinal Radziwiłł in 1593, who ordered restraint and good taste.⁵⁰ The previous visitation official, Rev. Reszka in 1585 had a canopy hung over the altar, and the rich jewels made as offerings, which formerly had hung on the picture were removed to separate boards. Only the most precious gifts were left on the picture itself, namely, the gems donated by the Queen of Poland, as well as the gold rings and chains.⁵¹ With the years, the jewels increased, and in the latter half of the 17th century, the monastery's chief embroiderer friar Clement Tomaszewski used them to make four dresses. These were next remade and changed; at present there are five such dresses. The picture was crowned in 1717 and 1910. The sceptre and orb are gifts of Polish women in 1926. One of the most interesting and popular procedures in the Jasna Góra church is the unveiling of the picture, performed to the accompaniment of an instrumental group, which during the unveiling always plays the old royal salute. The silver tributary scroll, placed under the picture, contains the document of placing the Nation under the motherly, love of Mary in 1966, and Pope Paul VI's brief confirming this fact.

The crowds of pilgrims that visited Jasna Góra from various parts of the country in the first half of the 15th century did not decrease over the centuries. Their social and spiritual profile has

⁴⁹ ZD no. 95, p. 174—175.

⁵⁰ *Tomus primus miraculorum B. V. monasterii Cestochoviensis*, AJ mark 2096, col. 49.

⁵¹ *Wizytacje konwentu Jasnej Góry: 1577—1743* (Visitations of the Jasna Góra convent: 1577—1743), AJ mark 2407, p. 16.

altered, but the pilgrimages have never stopped, not even during the Nazi occupation of Poland during World War II. The holydays of the Mother of God bring groups and crowds of pilgrims, who have always come to the "holy site in Częstochowa" to save their souls and bow before the Mother of God.

In 1429, King Ladislas Jagiełło⁵² wrote to Pope Martin V that in Jasna Góra due to the grace of God there are many mysterious miracles, that many come there in the hope of receiving indulgences and salvation. Długosz, in connection with the information that the sanctuary had been robbed in 1430, stated that pilgrims, drawn by the fame of exceptional cures, hurried to the holy site from the whole territory of Poland, as well as from Silesia, Moravia, Prussia, and Hungary, to take part in the celebration services honoring Mary's holydays. The presence of numerous pilgrims from Hungary is confirmed both by Risinius and the Order's Confraternity book (started in 1517)⁵³, in which Hungarian signatures can be found. It is characteristic that sometimes the title of St. Paul's confraternity is changed to the confraternity of the Blessed Virgin at Jasna Góra. One hundred years later the Jasna Góra Shrine became too small for the increasing number of pilgrims. According to their own estimates the monastery needed 70 friars, including at least 30 confessors, and as evidence it is said that in 1629 some 200,000 pilgrims received communion there, and all of them wished to go to confession first. Author Nieszporckowic wrote: „Annually, the citizens of smaller and bigger towns were accustomed to visiting this place with their own rows and those of whole communities, never, however, were the crowds so large as in the year of Our Lord 1630 after the dangerous plague that hit the whole country. It happened that on one day sometimes 15, sometimes 20 or 30 thousand people came to fulfill the promises made during the plague, and here they grouped to go to confession and holy communion.⁵⁴ The title of „Queen of Poland" used by preachers in describing the Blessed Virgin was very soon linked with the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa as its iconographical presentation, and this was strengthened by Father Augustyn Kordecki's *Nowa gigantomachia*, in which the author published the text of the Lwów pledges made by King John Casimir. These vows were preceded by the proclamation declaring the Blessed Virgin as Queen of Poland.⁵⁵ The coronation

⁵² ZD no. 95, p. 174—175.

⁵³ *Sequitur regestrum confraternitatis ordinis fratrum heremitarum s. Pauli primi heremitaе*, 1517, AJ, mark. 798,

⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁵⁵ S. Szafraniec, *Trzechsetlecie Maryjnej elekcji* (300 years of Mary's election), *Ateneum Kapłańskie* 49(1957) p. 16—27.

of the picture at Jasna Góra on September 8, 1717 was considered as the coronation of the Mother of God as the hereditary Queen of Poland. The celebration is said to have attracted some 200.000 pilgrims.

The loss of independence slowed down the pilgrimage trend, which was very great toward the end of the 19th century. Again during the interwar period, Jasna Góra became the site of the Episcopate's conference, a centre of congresses and conferences, and in 1936 even the seat of the Plenary Synod. Among the number of pledges made at that time, a prominent place must be given to the Episcopate's Act of July 27, 1920,⁵⁶ in which the bishops of Poland headed by Edmund Cardinal Dalbor chose the Blessed Virgin "once again as our Queen and Lady".

In recent years mass celebrations honoring Our Lady at Jasna Góra were opened by the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on September 8, 1946, which in turn prepared the way for the "Jasna Góra Vows" on August 26, 1956. The Great Novena started the following year and the prayers for the Second Vatican Council were continuously held at Jasna Góra and the Shrine became the national spiritual center which in a lasting way influenced the Polish Church. The "six years of gratitude" preceding the Anniversary of Jasna Góra in 1982 have the same character.

The changes of economic conditions have not basically altered the character of pilgrimages to Jasna Góra. While there are fewer pilgrim groups who journey on foot, there are more small pilgrimages organized within families, and the time for such pilgrimages has been spread out, and covers practically all days free from work. The annual Warsaw pilgrimage on foot to Jasna Góra has grown in size and has taken on the shape of retreats held during the trip to Jasna Góra. During the past dozen or so years, foreign tourism has grown at Jasna Góra: there are pilgrim groups from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Italy, and especially from the United States of America.

Statistics (which have an impact all their own) show that in 1971 at Jasna Góra communion was given to 947,810 people, and in 1976—1,085,070.

The fortress built in the thirties of the 17th century, completed during the siege in November and December of 1655, expanded in the first half of the 18th century, has served as a defensive structure for the holy site. It had its right of existence in the political conditions and the frontier character of its location. The fortifications

⁵⁶ Original text of pledge with the autographs of the bishops: *Uroczystości i nabożeństwa*, AJ mark 2103, p. 151—152.

were destroyed in 1813 and the defense walls were rebuilt in the middle of the 19th century. Between 1900 and 1913, the fields around the fortress were converted into a park and 14 Stations of the Cross were erected as a place of prayer and meditation for the pilgrims.

From the interwar period to the present, Jasna Góra became a retreat house for the bishops of Poland and oftentimes the site for their conferences. The Church is the scene of the renewal of vows and prayers for groups, societies and organizations; it is the center of pastoral ministry guided by the Polish episcopate.