

THE INSTITUTE OF SYSTEMATICS AND EVOLUTION OF ANIMALS, OF THE POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, IN KRAKÓW, POLAND

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ABSTRACT.— The Institute of Systematics and Experimental Zoology, of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN), in Kraków, Poland, is given a historical review, particularly as this pertains to its Lepidoptera collections.

KEY WORDS: collections, Europe, history, museums, taxonomy.

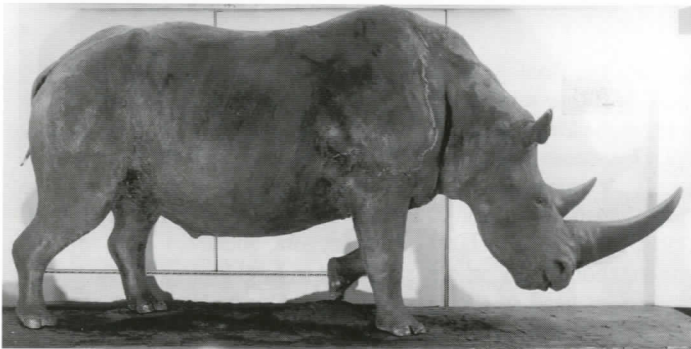


Fig. 1. Part of the museum exposition and symbol of the Institute: the woolly rhinoceros from Starunia.

The Institute, heir to the Physiographical Commission of the Scientific Society of Kraków (Cracow), has a long history complicated by various changes and transformations that occurred over the last 130 years.

In 1865, the Scientific Society of Cracow erected the Physiographical Commission, whose aim was to gather materials and information first of Galicia, then of all of Poland. The *Cracovian Time* published an appeal to transfer to the Commission specimens and collections, which met a positive reaction of many naturalists. There flowed in also the collections of many amateurs from Cracow and its province. At first, the collection of the Commission was located in the Zoological Cabinet of the Jagiellonian University, but in 1870, the zoological collections were transported to the building of the Society at Sławkowska Street, No. 17, where they exist until today. S. Zaręczny, the entomologist and geologist, was the first supervisor of the collection. In 1873, the Physiographical Commission and its already conspicuous collections curated by Dr. W. Kulczyński, a famous arachnologist, were incorporated into the Academy of Sciences and Letters. But the first official position of Custodian was established only in 1880 and was given to K. Jelski. Only some years after Jelski's death, in 1910, Kulczyński became the custodian of the already large collections and an exhibition located in the new part of the building. The First World War paralyzed the functioning of the Commission for five years.

In 1919, Kulczyński died, and this is a date for the end of the first period of activity of the Physiographical Commission. Since then, the Physiographical Museum, then the Zoological Museum of



Fig. 2. Building of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters, housing the Institute museum, on Sławkowska Street, opposite Jagiellonian University.

the Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters, was lead by Prof. Dr.h.c. J. Stach, the paleontologist and entomologist. A new exhibition opened in 1922 consisting of three parts: the geological, the botanical and the zoological. A discovery of a so-called second woolly rhinoceros (*Celodonta antiquitatis*) (Fig. 1) in Starunia (1929) increased the importance of the Museum.

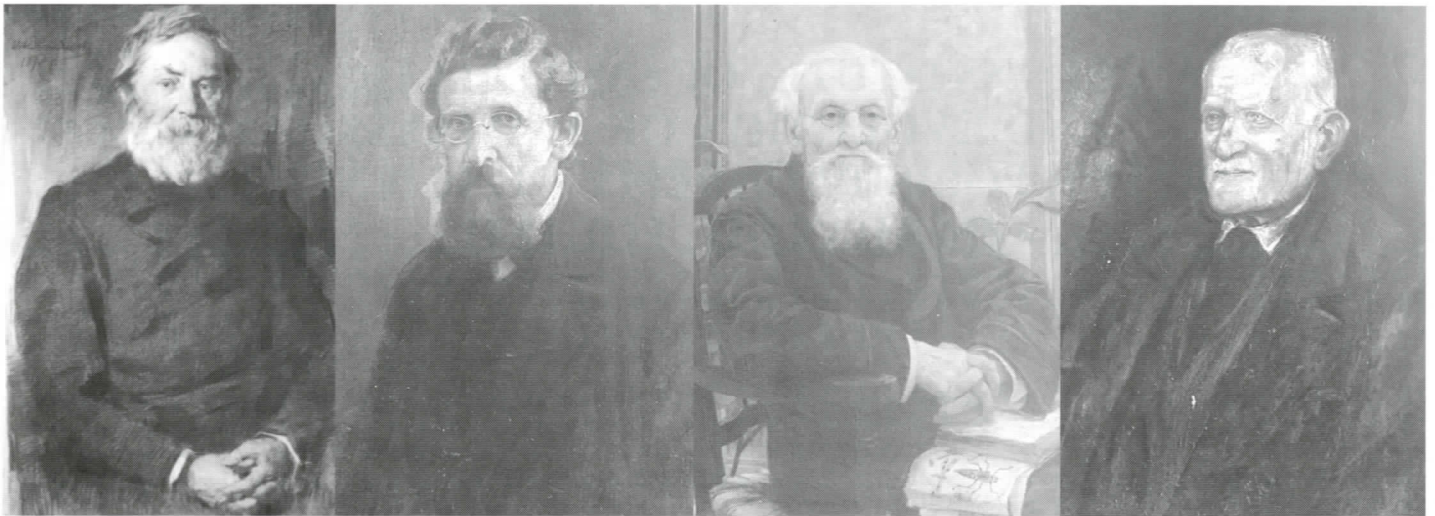


Fig. 3-6. Museum directors (left to right): 3) Konstanty Jelski (1837-1896), the first custodian of the Physiographical Commission of the Scientific Society of Cracow, naturalist and traveller, and explorer of Neotropical faunas. 4) Dr. Władysław Kulczyński (1854-1919), custodian and specialist of Arachnida. 5) Dr. Antoni Waga (1799-1890), naturalist, chiefly entomologist and traveller. 6) Dr. h.c. Jan W. Stach (1877-1975), head of the Institute until 1961 and famous specialist of apterygotans, as well as palaeontologist (portrait by J. Świecimski).

After World War 2 in the years 1945/46, the Museum and its new exhibition was opened, but in 1953 the property of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Letters was taken over by the newly organized Polish Academy of Sciences. The collections and exhibitions of the Natural History Museum were divided into three parts. The botanical part was transferred to the Institute of Botany PAS, the geological to the Institute of Geology PAS, and only the zoological collection and zoological part of the exhibition remained in the Cracow Branch of the newly organized Zoological Institute PAS, Warsaw.

In 1961, Professor Stach retired and Prof. K. Kowalski, the teriologist, became the new head of the institution. In 1962, the institution was reputedly self-dependent under a new name, as Department of Systematic Zoology, and in 1969 the Department of

Experimental Zoology and the Laboratory of Neuroanatomy of the Nencki Institute were incorporated, which caused another change of name, to the Department of Systematic and Experimental Zoology, PAS. After several years (1961-78 and 1985-87) under Prof. Kowalski's management, the Department was lead by the three entomologists: first Prof. J. Pawłowski, the coleopterist, then Prof. A. Szeptycki, the specialist of Apterygota, and from 1988 to 1996 by the author of this article, specialist in Lepidoptera (Tortricidae). The present head of the Institute, Doc. Dr. A. Nadachowski, is a specialist of theriology.

In 1989, the Department acquired the status of Institute and again changed its name to the Institute of Systematics and Evolution of Animals. The Institute is composed of four departments: Invertebrate Zoology, Vertebrate Zoology, Experimental Zoology,

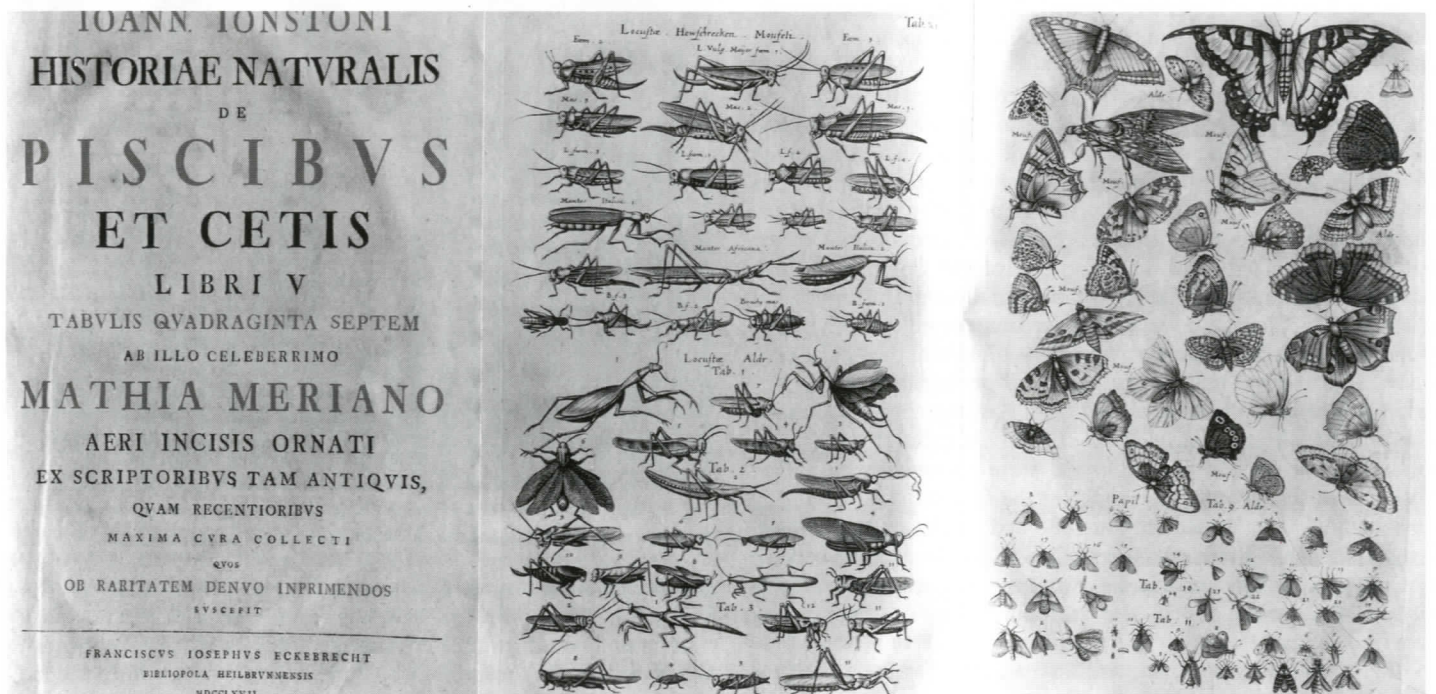


Fig. 7-9. Book by Jan Jonston (Jonstoniusz of Szamotuły; 1603-1675), *Historiae naturalis . . .*, edition of 1767 (first edition in 1653), in the library of the Institute.

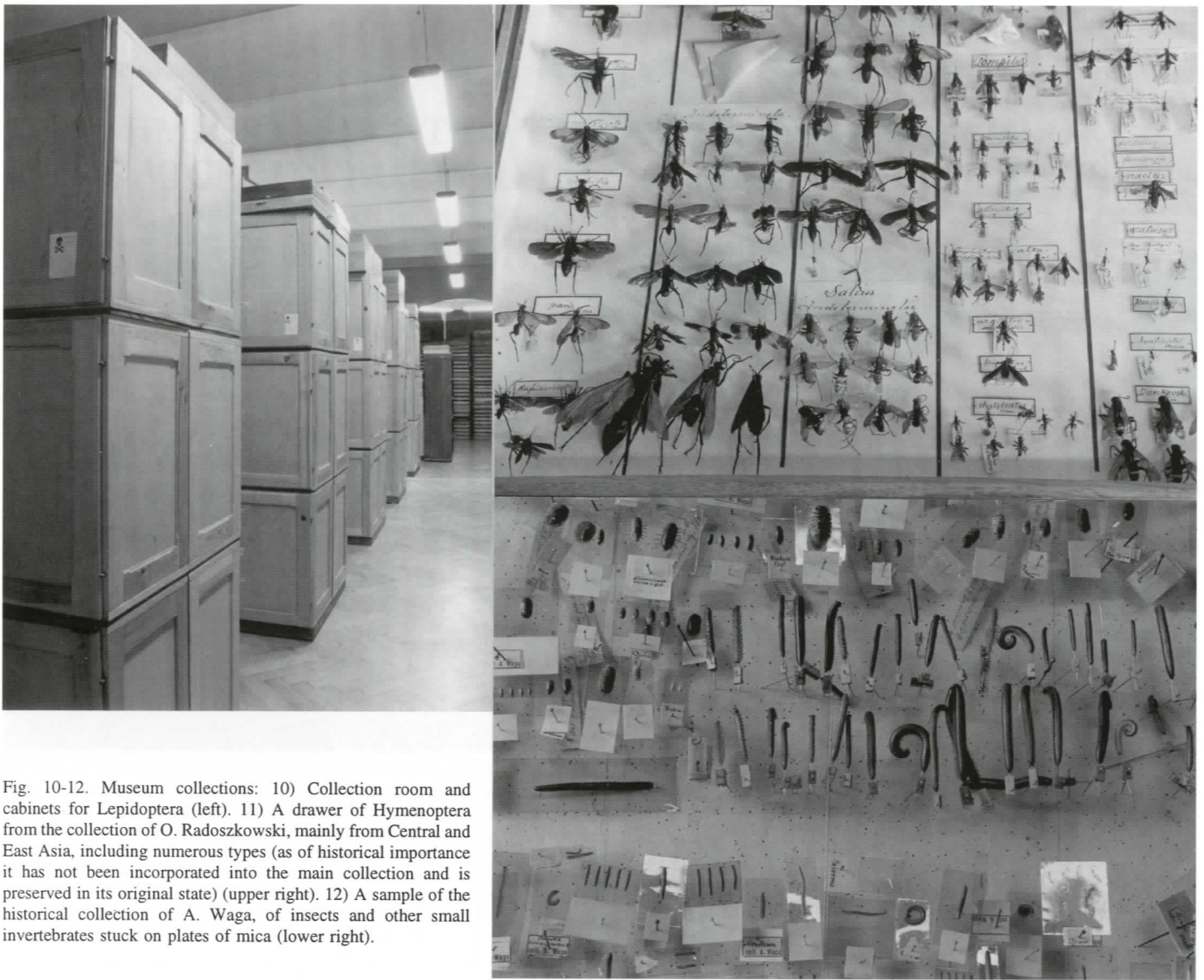


Fig. 10-12. Museum collections: 10) Collection room and cabinets for Lepidoptera (left). 11) A drawer of Hymenoptera from the collection of O. Radoszkowski, mainly from Central and East Asia, including numerous types (as of historical importance it has not been incorporated into the main collection and is preserved in its original state) (upper right). 12) A sample of the historical collection of A. Waga, of insects and other small invertebrates stuck on plates of mica (lower right).

and Natural History Museum, plus four auxiliary units (Biological Station in the Ojców National Park, the Chiropterological Information Center, the Library, and the Institute Archives and Editorial Center). The present staff is about 70 persons (recently shortened to 60), including 10 professors and 3 docents. The exhibitions were transferred to a new building now still under a renovation.

The scientific collections include about 2 million specimens, curated by the departments (vertebrates, invertebrates, collection of living standard stocks of Paramecia/Protozoa, and collection of spare exhibition examples). There are some historically important collections of invertebrates, such as those of A. Waga, T. Trella, S. Klemensiewicz, and O. Radoszkowski. This last is very valuable and consists of Palearctic Hymenoptera including numerous types. Some recent collections, such as those of S. Smreczyński, Sr. (Homoptera, Heteroptera), S. Smreczyński, Jr. (Coleoptera: Curculionidae), S. Toll (Lepidoptera), and J. Stach (Apterygota), are of special importance. The Institute staff is contributing material from various expeditions to areas in the Palearctic, Nearctic, Oriental and Neotropical regions. For instance, collecting trips to Korea were completed over a rather long period (1971-1992). The domestic fauna has also been successively surveyed. As concerns the vertebrates, the investigations and collections deal with the contemporary and fossil faunas since the middle of the 19th century. The systematic and archeological studies of cave sediments were started

at the end of the last century as well.

The arachnological studies have been done by A. Kulczyński (end of 19th and early 20th centuries) and at that time this institution was an important center of arachnology. Then became a period devoted mainly to the apterygotans, thanks to the long activity of J. Stach, still continued by two persons. There is also a tradition of studies in Coleoptera and Lepidoptera. Now the Institute staff works in the systematics and faunistics of Collembola (1 person), Coleoptera (4), Diptera (2), Gastropoda (1), Orthoptera (1), Lepidoptera (2), and Protura (1); two persons deal with the fossil and subfossil insects.

At present, the studies on fossil and recent vertebrates started by Stach in the 1920s are continuing: in mammals (5 persons in Chiroptera, Insectivora, Proboscidea, Rodentia), in birds (3), and in reptiles (1). Their studies are based on the faunas from several stands from Miocene to the Holocene, mainly from Poland. Several new localities date back to the Pliocene but the majority of work concerns the Neogene and early Pleistocene. This last is worked out in cooperation with archeologists. There are also studies based on other material, e.g., from Africa and Asia.

In the Department of Experimental Zoology, the investigations concern insect karyology, genetics, and cytophysiology. These studies were extended to karyosystematic analysis and geographical distribution, e.g., of Protozoa.

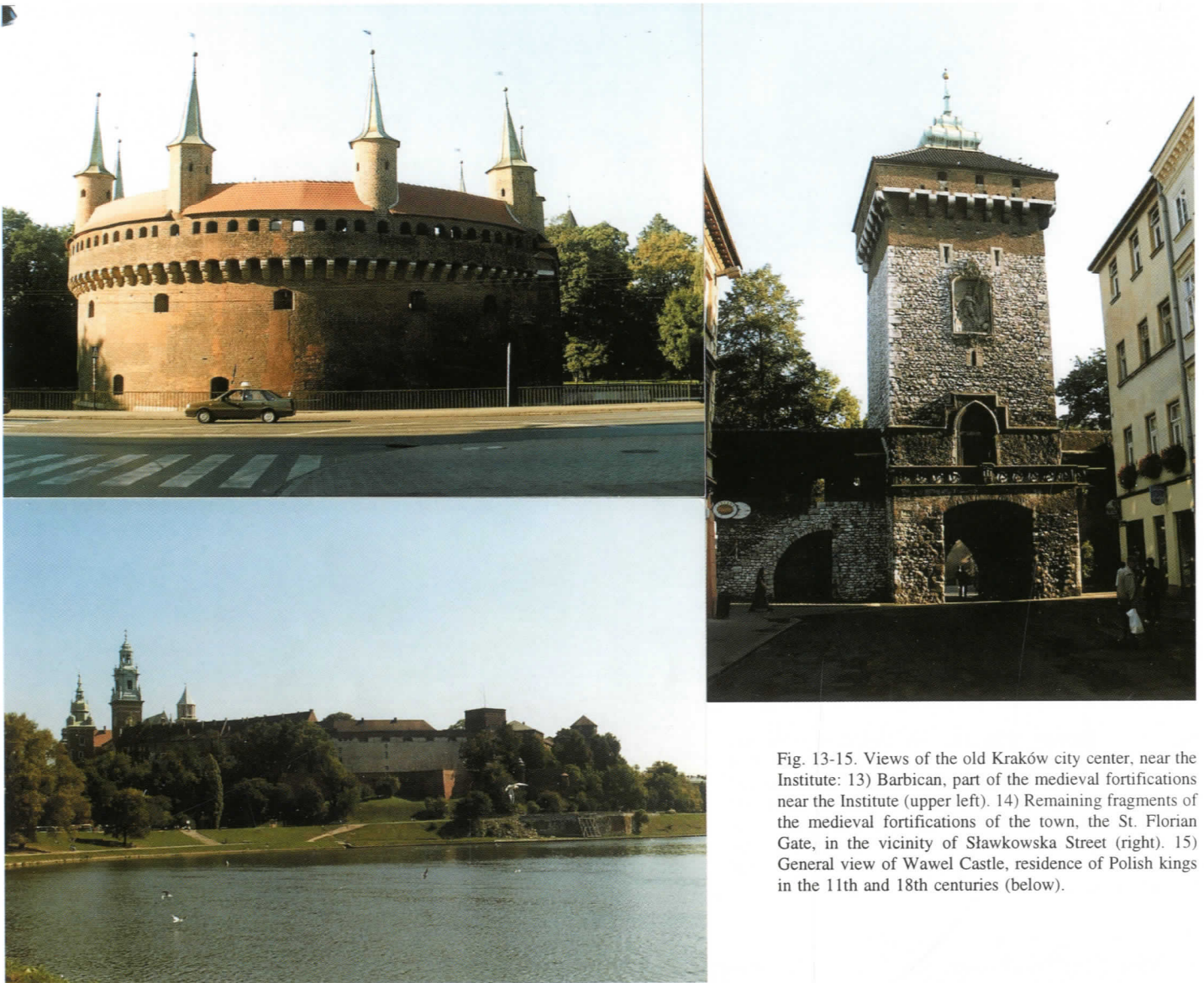


Fig. 13-15. Views of the old Kraków city center, near the Institute: 13) Barbican, part of the medieval fortifications near the Institute (upper left). 14) Remaining fragments of the medieval fortifications of the town, the St. Florian Gate, in the vicinity of Sławkowska Street (right). 15) General view of Wawel Castle, residence of Polish kings in the 11th and 18th centuries (below).

Since almost the beginning, publication started of the first series, the *Sprawozdania Komisji Fizyograficznej* (Reports of the Physio-graphical Commission). Then there was a series, *Starunia* (1934-1953), dealing with the results of the explorations in the Eastern Carpathians. J. Stach started and edited two series, viz., *Prace Muzeum Przyrodniczego P.A.U.* and *Acta Musei Historiae Naturalis*, from 1945-1947. Now the Institute issues two journals, the annual *Acta zoologica cracoviensia*, since 1956, and quarterly *Folia biologica*, also since 1956. The series *Monografie fauny Polski* (Monographs of the Fauna of Poland), since 1973 composed of 20 volumes published to date, and the *Wykaz zwierząt Polski* (Checklist of animals of Poland), 5 volumes since 1990 which make it complete. Besides these, there are various general monographs and popular works published occasionally at irregular intervals.

The Library contains about 90,000 books and journals, including about 550 old-prints. Institute publications are exchanged with over 700 scientific journals and series worldwide.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Photographs all by Marek Kopeć and Łukasz Przybyłowicz. Portraits in the Institute (excl. Fig. 6, property of the Museum and Zoological Institute PAS, Warsaw).