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### THE INSTITUTIONS HOSTING THE 2ND ICESHS:

#### The Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (Polska Akademia Umiejętności)<sup>1</sup>

AT THE END OF THE 18<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY POLAND losing its independence became subdued by the three neighbour powers. Three universities: in Cracow (Kraków), Lwów (Lviv) and Wilno (Vilnius) went under the process of Germanization or Russification. Fortunately, the Jagiellonian University in Kraków resisted full Germanization. Generally the situation in that part of Poland which was under the Austrian power was better than in the two other parts, in particular cultural and education institutions in Kraków and in the whole region were much less oppressed than in the parts being under Prussian and Russian power. The period of 1815–1846 is noted as the time of so-called “Republic of Kraków” having relatively significant degree of independence.

In the early 80's of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a scientific corporation was established in Kraków on the basis of the existing since 1816 the “Cracow Learning Society” attached to the Jagiellonian University (*Towarzystwo Naukowe Krakowskie*). The newly created corporation was named Academy of Arts and Sciences (*Akademia Umiejętności*). Its statutes was formally approved by the Imperial Consent on February 16, 1872 and its inauguration meeting took place on May 7, 1873. When Poland regained its independence in 1918, the Academy became the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (*Polska Akademia Umiejętności*) known by its Polish acronym PAU.

The Academy, from the very beginning of its existence, was acting as a corporation of scientists honoured by prestigious membership obtainable by elections.

Immediately after the Second World War the Academy started its scientific activity being precluded during the tragic war period. On January 26, 1945, eight days after Kraków was captured by the Soviet Red Army from the Nazi occupants, a meeting of the Executive Board of PAU took place and very soon the first program of work was proposed. However, the activity of the Academy became frozen about seven years later because of political reasons. In the early 50' of the 20<sup>th</sup> century communist authorities intensified the process of taking control over the scientific, cultural and academic life in Poland. In 1952 PAU was practically — but not quite formally — closed or “suspended”. Generally (but — unfortunately — with some sad exceptions) its members became members of the newly created Polish Academy of Sciences modeled in another way, as a State institution. Deep changes of the Polish political system allowed in 1989 the restoration of PAU by a small group of the Academy members survived till that time. The General Assembly meeting was held on November 16, 1989. Professor Gerard Labuda was elected the first President of the reborn Academy. He run this office till 1994, being succeeded by professor Kazimierz Kowalski whose presidency finished in 2000. Now the chair of the President of PAU is held by professor Andrzej Białas.

Let us underline that now between the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Polish Academy of Sciences which has a very high prestigious position, there are very good relations and effective cooperation.

The Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences consists of six classes: Philology; History and Philosophy; Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry; Natural Sciences; Medicine; Artistic Creativity. There are several commissions and committees. Two of PAU Commissions: History of Sciences (established in 1998) and European Affairs (established in 2003) are involved in the organization of the present Conference of the European Society for the History of Science.

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<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to translate “directly”, in a manner “word to word” the name Polska Akademia Umiejętności, since the term *umiejętności* has a meaning broader than *science* and could be understood simultaneously as knowledge, science, acquirements and — in this context — arts. Thus the name *Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences* reflects perfectly the meaning of the Polish name. Notice that the name *Polish Academy of Sciences*, the institution mentioned in the sequel, refers directly and precisely to the name *Polska Akademia Nauk*.