

Helena Antonina Maria Willman-Grabowska

born: January 4, 1870 in Warsaw, died October 31, 1957 in Krakow. The first woman in the history of the Jagiellonian University with the title of full professor (1937), lecturer at the Paris Sorbonne, originator of Polish Indian studies, co-author of Iranian studies

correspondent member of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences (1945), secretary (1935) and chairwoman (1948-52) of the Orientalist Commission of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, member of the Polish Oriental Society and Polish Linguistic Society¹, Société Asiatique and Société Linguistique in France, honorary member of the L'Association Française des Amis de l'Orient

member of the secret Pedagogical Society [tajne Towarzystwo Pedagogiczne] (1903-05), founding member and board member of the Polish Teachers' Union in Warsaw (1905-1908), in the years 1927-1950, and from 1956 onwards a member of the Polish Teachers' Union in Krakow²

fluent knowledge of languages: French, Russian, German, English, Sanskrit (in reading texts), Hindi, Dravidian, Latin, Greek. some knowledge of Italian, Czech and Spanish³

distinctions: Honorary badge for the Fight for Polish School, awarded for many years of work at the University

Before leaving Poland (1870-1909)



"From my childhood I remember only the funerals of younger siblings, the fire of our home and the bitter remarks of the Father" - writes Helena Willman-Grabowska in the last, most detailed of her curricula vitae, which have been preserved in the Archives of the Jagiellonian University⁴. Her father, Józef Grabowski was the January 1863

1) Portrait of Professor Helena Willman-Grabowska (photo on paper, from manuscript 12519. Photographs of various people from Krystyna Stachowska's papers). Special collections. Scientific Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Polish Academy of Sciences in Krakow.
http://pauart.pl/app/artwork?id=BZS_RKPS_12519_k_1_18 (27.12.2017)

¹ Pismo Rady WF UJ do Ministerstwa Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dn. 22.02.1957, (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil. 619 [Letter from the Council of the Faculty of Philology of the Jagiellonian University to the Ministry of Higher Education, dated 22.02.1957, (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)], p. 1.

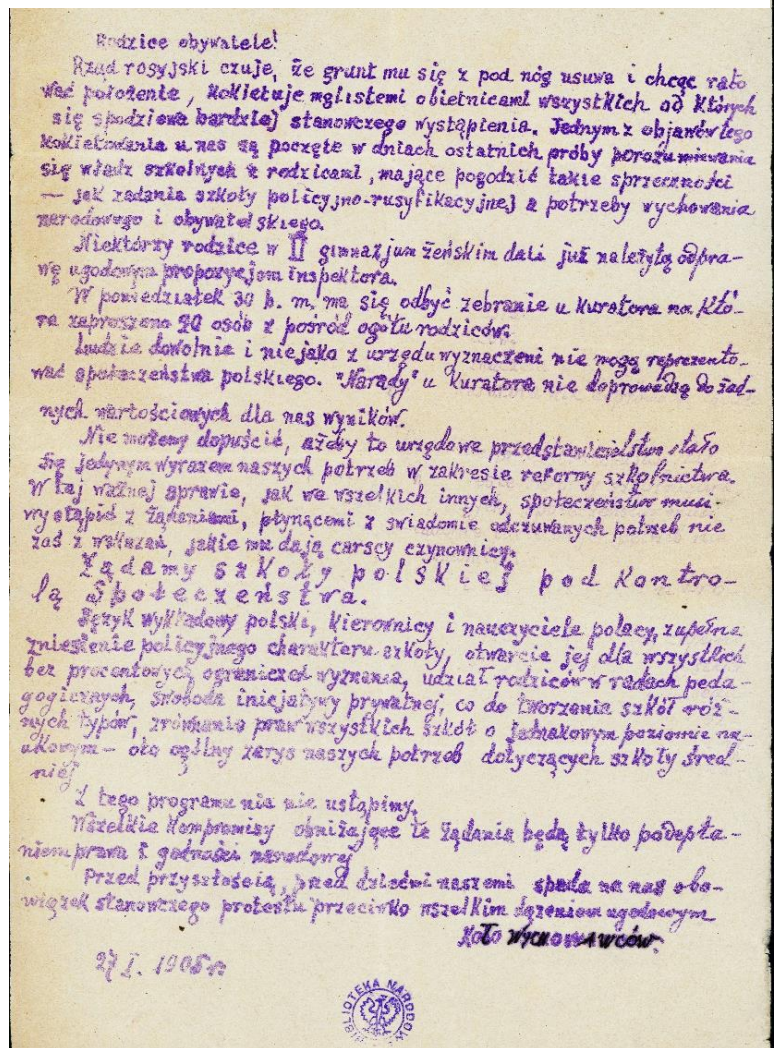
² Helena Willman-Grabowska, Ankieta personalna, 27 marca 1956 (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil. 619) [Helena Willman-Grabowska, Personal Questionnaire, 27 March 1956, Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619].

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ In Willman-Grabowska's personal file (reference number Sil 619) in the Archives of the Jagiellonian University there are several curricula coming from various periods of the scholar's life, and with different level of detail.

Uprising insurrectionist.⁵ Already as a small boy he remained "without a family or a livelihood". The Father, the scholar continues, was reluctant to educate her ("learning for boys, for the girl matrimony and the farm"), while her mother Elżbieta (née Lipińska) and grandmother inspired her to acquire education.⁶ From the period of education in the Second Female High School in Warsaw, which she graduated from with honors in 1886, teenage Helena remembered Rosa Luxemburg, a "small, lame, talented and daring" girl from the lower class with whom she was friends until Rosa left.⁷ Under Russian partition, Helena began working as a teacher at the age of 17, first in Włocławek in 1887, and from 1888 in Warsaw. Here she works in various places, teaching various subjects: in Helena

2) *Appeal of the Circle of Educators from January 27, 1905. The authors turn to their parents "in the second girls' high school", in which H. Willman-Grabowska learned and worked: "We demand a Polish school under the control of society. The language of instruction Polish, managers and teachers Poles, the complete abolition of the police state character of the school, opening it to all without percentage restrictions on religion, the participation of parents in pedagogical councils, freedom of private initiative for creating schools of various types [...]. We will not give up this program."* Source: The New Digital National Library of Polona: <https://polona.pl/item/rodzice-obywatele-inc-rzad-rosyjski-czuje-iz-grunt-mu-sie-z-pod-nog-usuwa-i-chcac,OTcwMzc1Nw/0/#item> (31.12.2017)



Paprocka Girls' Boarding School she is a French language teacher (1888-1898), in the Second Girls' Gymnasium (1889-1905) and in several men's schools she teaches Polish.⁸ She runs

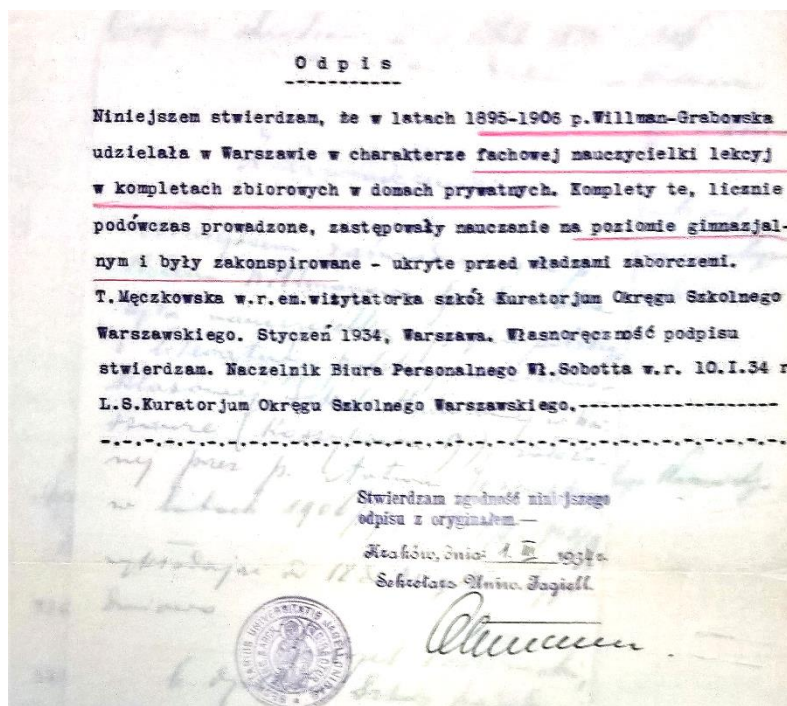
⁵ A. Śródka, *Uczni polscy XIX i XX stulecia [Polish Scientists of the 19 and 20 century]*. Vol. IV: S-Ż, Warszawa: Aries, 1998, p. 485.

⁶ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego w st[anie] sp[oczynku] Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Kraków, marzec 1956 (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil 619) [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor of the Jagiellonian University. Written in Krakow in March 1956, (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)], p. 1.

⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁸ Helena Willman-Grabowska, Ankieta personalna, 27 marca 1956...[[Helena Willman-Grabowska, Personal Questionnaire, 27 March 1956...]].

Courses for Educators (1906-1912)⁹, which are conducted in connection with her activities in the Circle of Educators (see below). At the same time, she is attending “clandestine lectures” and studying the subject she was fond of – mathematics.¹⁰ With the support of professors Yefim F. Karski and Jan Baudouin de Courtenay (1845-1929), she tries for the possibility of taking a state examination, but then the Minister of Education Glazov from St. Petersburg does not agree to it¹¹, so she interrupts her studies. From 1886 to 1908 she teaches "clandestine evening classes for workers" as a teacher of Polish literature and language. “I belonged to the so-called "Progressives"¹² - she writes in her CV - and I was very active in the education for adults, especially for workers who needed to be made socially aware"¹³. This activity was



3) Certificate of secret teaching conducted by H. Willman-Grabowska in Warsaw in the years 1895-1906. Copy of the original. (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619).

related to her affiliation to the secret Pedagogical Society, founded in 1903 by Stanisław Karpowicz (1864-1921), a pedagogue and social activist, and in cooperation with the secret Circle of Educators. The activities of both organizations consisted of an active fight for a Polish school under the Russian partition, where the Pedagogical Society set itself the “general social” goal and focused on preparing a reform of private school programs. Its members were “propagators of struggle and ideologues of creativity.”¹⁴ Wider external activities of the Circle,

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego... [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor...], p.1

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Progressive Polish teachers of the period sought to establish a Polish school by means of a “systematic and persistent fight”. Their programme contrasted with that of the so-called “Conciliators”, who tried to deal with the authorities of the partitioner by way of a compromise, sending them memorials.

¹³ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego... [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor...], p. 1.

¹⁴ H. Orsza-Radlińska, *Koło Wychowawców* [The Circle of Educators], in: B. Nawroczyński (Ed.). *Nasza walka o szkołę polską (1901-1917). Opracowania, wspomnienia, dokumenty* [Our Fight for the Polish school (1901-1917). Studies, memories, documents], Vol. II, Warszawa: Komitet obchodu 25-lecia walki o szkołę polską, 1934, p.114.

for example, organizing rallies and printing appeals and leaflets, began in 1904, and eventually led to the general school strike. "Among the institutions established under the name of the Pedagogical Society, the Courses for Educators, disclosed in 1906 under the name of H. Willman-Grabowska lasted the longest (up to 1911)."¹⁵ Willman-Grabowska co-organized in 1905 a school strike, together with Karpowicz, Ludwik Krzywicki (1859-1941), a Marxist thinker, sociologist and politician, and Julian Marchlewski (1866-1925), an activist of the workers' movement. "Organized youth demanded the Polish school, i.e. with the Polish language of instruction. They left government schools. I left the gymnasium. It happened during a very turbulent period. I lost my husband at that time, the older child was three years old, the younger was just a few weeks old."¹⁶ About her husband, Czesław Aleksy Willman (1869-1922) little and conflicting information is available. Sometimes he was supposed to be a well-known Warsaw industrialist (Śródka, 1998, p. 485), and another - an accountant. In the documents preserved in the Archives of the Jagiellonian University, Willman-Grabowska does not write anything about the profession of her husband. The older son, Wacław (1902-1908) died in childhood. Her daughter Elżbieta Willman (1905-1985), worked at the Institute of French Studies of the JU as a French language teacher. Willman-Grabowska, after resigning from mathematical studies, remains faithful to her linguistic interests "with the strong and cordial encouragement from Professor Baudouin de Courtenay"¹⁷. In 1905, she contributed to the establishment of an open public organization, the Polish Teachers' Union. The founding act refers to the following aims of the Union: "Work on improving Polish education and out-of-school education; introducing sound and rational pedagogical principles and the idea of free teaching; defending and supporting the interests of the Polish teachers."¹⁸ The Polish Teachers' Union also published works in the field of methodology of various teaching subjects. In 1908 Willman-Grabowska contributed her article to the first series of the publications. In 1908 (as she writes in her personal questionnaire of 1956, or in 1909 (according to most sources)

¹⁵ *Idem*, p. 122.

¹⁶ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego... [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor...], p. 2.

¹⁷ Curriculum vitae prof. dr Heleny Willmanowej-Grabowskiej, datowane 16 czerwca 1949 (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil 619) [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska dated 16 June 1949 (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)], p. 1.

¹⁸ A. Drogoszewski, *Polski Związek Nauczycielski 1905-1917*. [the Polish Teachers' Union 1905-1917], in *Nasza walka o szkołę polską (1901-1917). Opracowania, wspomnienia, dokumenty* [Our Fight for the Polish school (1901-1917). Studies, memories, documents], B. Nawroczyński (Ed.), Vol. II, Warszawa: Komitet obchodu 25-lecia walki o szkołę polską, 1934, p. 253.

Willman-Grabowska leaves the country with a three-year-old daughter, and goes to study abroad. She stays abroad continuously until 1927.

Studies abroad, academic work in Paris and Kraków (1909-1947)

Helena Willman-Grabowska is "the first woman in the history of the Jagiellonian University with the title of full professor"¹⁹, the actual founder of broadly understood studies on languages, culture and civilization of India and co-founder of Iranian studies in Poland. In her scientific work she dealt with not only the above-mentioned areas; from the "Warsaw" period, her interest in Polish studies remained, she was involved in literary comparative studies, issues related to the field of religious studies or socio-cultural studies. She was also a translator of literature. In the earliest of her biographies (from around 1927?), Willman Grabowska writes that she first studied at the universities in Bern and Lausanne (1909-11), where she submitted doctoral examinations in comparative literature²⁰. Two doctoral dissertations from that period: *Le romantisme comme décadence littéraire* and *Mérimée et la littérature russe*, were not published. In Paris, beginning with 1911, she studied comparative grammar, as well as Indo-Iranian languages and civilizations. At the Sorbonne (École pratique des hautes études) and at the Collège de France, an esteemed institution in which the first Chair of Sanskrit in Europe was created in 1814, Willman-Grabowska studied under such scholars as Louis Finot, Alfred Foucher, Sylvain Lévi and Antoine Meillet. In the years 1920-1927, she lectured at the Sorbonne (École pratique des hautes études). The scholar mentions the Paris nomination for the lecturer of Sanskrit and Pali, the language of the Buddhist canon, as "a completely isolated case of appointment for higher - scientific official position 1) someone from among foreigners [...] 2) a woman [...]; 3) a person who not only was not naturalized, but clearly emphasized her Polish citizenship; 4) a person who is neither well-off, nor related to anyone of importance, nor ever asking any favours."²¹ In 1921, in co-authorship with Meillet, she wrote the academic textbook *Grammaire de la langue polonaise*. She is also the author of practical grammars: Polish for French and French for Poles (*Méthode de polonais. Grammaire et exercices*, 1922, 1929,

¹⁹ R. Czekalska, A. Kuczkiewicz-Fraś, *Helena Willman-Grabowska: orientalistka – uczona – popularyzatorka* [Helena Willman-Grabowska: Orientalist – Scholar – Populariser], Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka, 2014, p. 13.

²⁰ Curriculum vitae Heleny z Grabowskich Willmanowej, niedatowane (1927 (?)) (Archiwum Uj,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil 619), 1927(?) [Curriculum vitae of Helena Willman, née Grabowska, undated (probably 1927) (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)].

²¹ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego... [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor...], p. 3.

Méthode de français à l'usage des Polonais, Grammaire, exercices et lectures, 1926). In 1922 and 1923, the French Ministry of Education entrusted her with a mission aimed at working for scientific and university cooperation between France and other countries. Willman-Grabowska visited Warsaw and Kraków.

Doktorat es-lettres uzyskany przez Polkę w Paryżu. Rodaczka nasza, profesor Helena Willman - Grabowska, wykładająca obecnie na Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim sanskryt i filologię indyjską, uzyskała w Sorbonie paryskiej doktorat państwowy es Lettres, po raz pierwszy udzielony Polce, po przedstawieniu jury dwóch tez. Pierwsza z nich p. t. »Le locatif dans le Rig Veda« stanowi tezę dodatkową; druga, teza główna p. t. »La composition nominale dans le Satapatha Brahmana«, jest bardzo obszerną pracą w dwóch częściach, ze szczegółowym wykazem wszystkich wyrazów złożonych, zawartych w tym tekście. Została ona przyjęta przez jury w wysokim uznaniem.

4) Information published in the Polish newspaper "Gazeta Lwowska" about H. Willman-Grabowska receiving the French state doctorate. In: „Gazeta Lwowska”, 12.02.1929, nr. 35, r. 119, section „Nauka-literatura-sztuka” [„Science-Literature-Art.”], p. 5.

<https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra/publication/45132/edition/39573/content?ref=desc> (28.12.2017)

The next stage of the scientific development of Willman-Grabowska was obtaining, in 1928, a state doctorate (doctorat ès lettres), which in France was at that time the highest scientific title granted in the humanities. She obtained this title on the basis of linguistic works: *Le locatif dans le Rigveda* (1928) and a two-part work entitled *Les composés nominaux dans le Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*. (1927, 1928). It was such an important event that it was reported by "Gazeta Lwowska" (1811-1939), a popular Polish newspaper published for with more than a century tradition (illustration 4) In addition, around 1919, Willman-Grabowska took steps to begin the habilitation procedure in Kraków . This is related in a letter written in 1919

by Baudouin de Courtenay, who formerly (in the years 1894-99) held the Chair of the Comparative Linguistics at the Jagiellonian University. The letter was addressed to Jan M. Rozwadowski (1867-1935), his colleague and friend who was nominated for the same Chair, after Baudouin de Courtenay was dismissed.²² Perhaps the strong and enthusiastic recommendation of Professor Silvain Lévi²³, which Baudouin de Courtenay quotes in the same

²² M. Skarżyński, „Nieznane listy Jana Baudouina de Courtenay do Jana M. Rozwadowskiego” [Unknown Letters of Jan Baudouin de Courtenay to Jan M. Rozwadowski], *LingVaria*, Vol. 1, nr 5, pp. 205-232, 2008. The author writes about the matter in the letter of 20 September 1919 (pp. 228-229): Mrs. Helena Willman-Grabowska asked me to initiate her habilitation in Kraków. She chose the wrong path because 1) I am not a Sanskritist [...]; 2) I am only an "honorable" [Professor], i.e., thrown out of the university; 3) I am in Warsaw, not in Kraków. I advised her to turn directly to you, my dear Colleague. It seems to me that she is indeed a thorough expert in Sanskrit, on which language she has been working intensively since 1911. I was also informed about her case by the Parisian professor Sylvain Lévi, who gave her a splendid recommendation. (translated from Polish by H. Marlewicz)

²³ *Ibidem*, an excerpt from the letter of recommendation of S. Lévi to J. Baudouin de Courtenay, p. 229.: J'ai l'honneur d'appeler votre bienveillante attention sur le travail et sur les titres de madame Willman-Grabowska. [...] Par un travail continu, soutenue par un zèle incessant, elle s'est initiée à l'ensemble des questions qui constituent le domaine de l'indianisme; elle possède à fond la langue, lit et traduit les textes tant classiques que

PIERWSZA PROFESORKA NA UNIWERSYTECIE JAGIELLOŃSKIM

Było to przed kilku laty. Wpadł mi przypadkowo w ręce „Kurjerek” krakowski, a w nim obok fotografii tak zamazanej, że trudno było rozpoznać, kogo przedstawiać miała, krótki artykuł o sukcesach uczonej Polki zagranicą i wiadomości o mianowaniu dr. Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej profesorem Sorbony w Paryżu na katedrze sanskrytu i literatury indyjskiej.

Czytałam raz, jeden, drugi, wpatrywałam się w zamazaną fotografię — i dusza mi rosła, że Polka została mianowana profesorem Sorbony i to w Paryżu, który tak niechętnie dopuszcza kobiety (a cóż dopiero — cudzoziemki!) do udziału w życiu naukowym i politycznym. Myślałam przytem: — Czyżby to naprawdę była nauczycielka nasza, kochana p. Helena Grabowska? która umiała, mimo szpiełowskich metod rosyjskiego gimnazjum, rozpałić w naszych sercach zamiłowanie do historii i literatury polskiej... Wyszła potem zamaz za Willmana — imię, oba nazwiska zgadzają się... Ona, czy nie ona?

Zamazana fotografia nie umiała dać odpowiedzi.

Dwa lata temu na pierwszą wiadomość, że dr. Willman-Grabowska została mianowana docentem Uniw. Jagiellońskiego, pośpieszyłam do niej z bijącym sercem: ona — czy nie ona?

Ona! ta sama, pełna inteligencji twarz, ten sam subtelny, zlekka ironizujący uśmiech — ta sama! tylko głowę jej przyprószyła trochę siwizna...



Dr. Helena Willmanowa.

5) An excerpt from the article entitled “The First Lady-Professor at the Jagiellonian University” by M. Mossoczowa, published in the journal for women “Bluszcz. Społeczno-literacki ilustrowany Tygodnik Kobiety” Warszawa, 4 January 1930, nr 1.p. 12.

http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/applet?mimetype=image%2Fxdjvu&sec=false&handler=djvu_html5&content_url=%2FContent%2F103033%2FBluszcz+1930+nr1.djvu&p=7 (31.12.2018)

letter, caused that when visiting Paris in 1923, Kazimierz Morawski (1852-1925) then the rector of the Jagiellonian University and the president of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences, accompanied by Jan M. Rozwadowski, met with Willman-Grabowska, urging her to return to Poland. They guaranteed that she will be given the Chair after Leon Mańkowski (1858-1908), as well as be able to develop Indian studies and create the then yet non-existent Iranian studies. Ultimately, Willman-Grabowska decided to return to Poland in October 1927. Despite previous declarations of the full professorship within two years' work at the Jagiellonian University, the prevailing crisis in Poland allowed the University authorities to find funding only for commissioned lectures. When in 1928 Willman-Grabowska received the title of doctor ès lettres "for two works in the field of linguistics and Indian studies"²⁴, "The Council of the Faculty of Philosophy of the Jagiellonian University, at the request of professors Tadeusz Kowalski, K[azimierz] Nitsch and J.M. Rozwadowski, appointed her to the Chair of Sanskrit and Indian Philology."²⁵ She was appointed an Associate

védiques; elle s'est attaché aux religions, à l'archéologie, elle a même voulu connaître le rayonnement antérieur de la civilisation indienne, spécialement sur l'Asie Centrale et la Chine. [...] Je souhaite vivement que Madame Willman-Grabowska puisse trouver dans sa patrie reconstituée un emploi digne de sa science et de ses dons.

²⁴ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego... [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor...], p. 3.

²⁵ R. Czekalska, A. Kuczkiewicz-Fraś, *Helena Willman-Grabowska: orientalistka – uczona – popularyzatorka...*, p. 18.

Professor on 19 November 1929²⁶. Both obtaining a French state doctorate, and the fact that Willman-Grabowska was awarded a university professorship were commented on in the progressive women's press (figure 5). She had to wait until 14 September 1937 to become a full professor, due to reprisals "for signing a protest against ill-treatment of prisoners in Bereza Kartuska."²⁷ The scientific-research, teaching and organizational activities of this period are best reflected in her own words of 1956:

I organized an Indology library, purchasing a book collection of prof. Mańkowski [with great difficulties, and largely by personal efforts]. I expanded the Sanskrit studies by introducing lectures on India's cultural, economic and social issues. I introduced the history of Buddhism, the Pali language and modern Indian languages. I initiated Iranian studies: Old-Persian, Avesta - also on a broad social basis. In recent years, i.e. after being given the sack [I have the right to speak about my 'retirement' in such terms] I have introduced the language of the Dravidians: the Dravidians occupy almost half of Hindustan. I have always argued that India is gaining its rightful place among the world's political powers, and in the near future it will be on a par also with economic powers of the world.²⁸

From October 1927 to September 1939 and from April 1945 to June 1951, Willman Grabowska was giving five hours of lectures and two hours of the seminar a week, which was then the prescribed teaching load for the university professor position.²⁹

With the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, Willman-Grabowska moved, along with her daughter, to Luborzyce near Kraków, probably living as the resident-guest at Maria Amoreaux estate.³⁰ Throughout this period she works as a researcher and, together with her daughter, conducts secret teaching for local youth.³¹ In response to the question of repression during the occupation, she testifies that she was "arrested, along with other professors, on November 6, 1939."³² H. Lipska describes it as follows: "the occupiers informed the Rector of

²⁶ T. Milewski, T. Pobożniak, *Historia językoznawstwa ogólnego, indoeuropejskiego i filologii indyjskiej w Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim*. In: W. Taszycki, A. Zaręba (Eds). *Wydział filologiczny Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Historia katedr*. Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 1964, p. 276.

²⁷ R. Czekalska, A. Kuczkiewicz-Fraś, Helena Willman-Grabowska: orientalistka – uczona – popularyzatorka..., p. 18.

²⁸ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego... [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor...], p. 4.

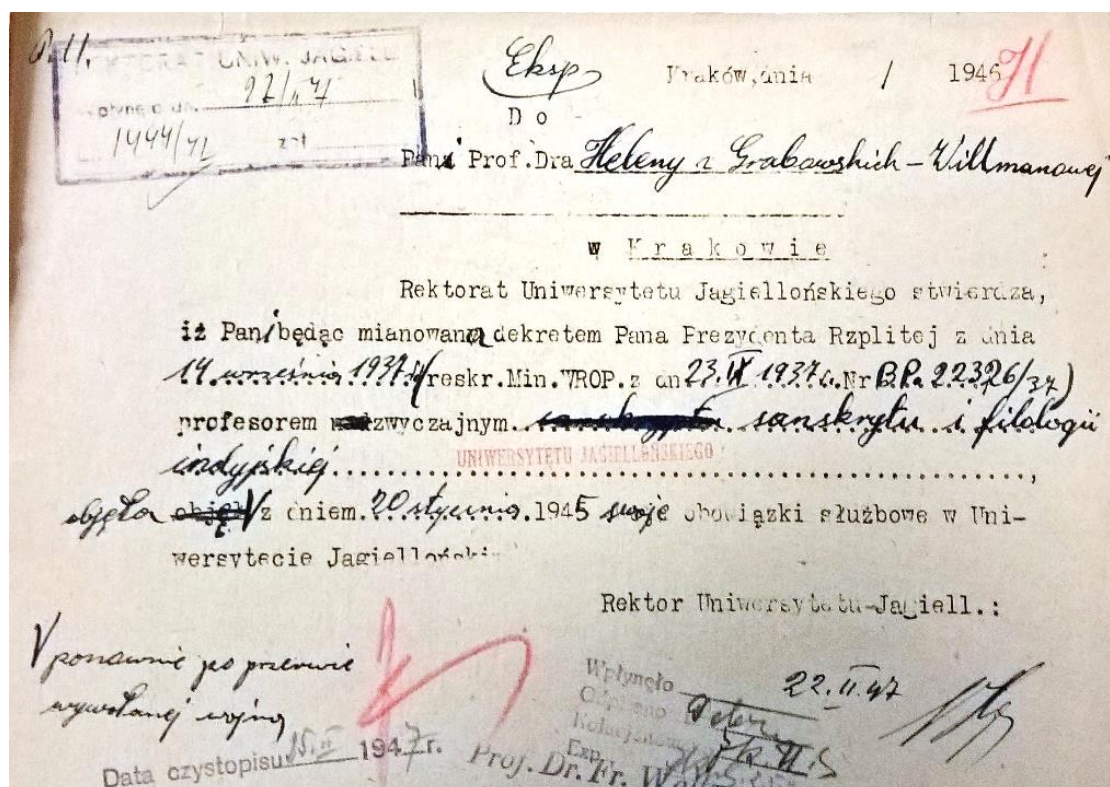
²⁹ R. Czekalska, A. Kuczkiewicz-Fraś, Helena Willman-Grabowska: orientalistka – uczona – popularyzatorka..., p. 19.

³⁰ M. M. Tytko. *Mjr prof. Stefan Szuman w walce o niepodległość Polski (1939-1945)* [Major Professor Stefan Szuman fighting for Poland's independence (1939-1945)], *Sowiniec*. 2014, 44, s. 61: *Permanent residents-guests of the Luborzyce estate manor [...] (not counting the Szumans themselves) were, among others: prof. Helena Willman-Grabowska, an orientalist at the Jagiellonian University (specialist in Sanskrit) and her daughter Elżbieta.* (transl. from Polish by H. Marlewicz)

³¹ A. Śródka, *Uczni polscy XIX i XX stulecia...*, p. 486.

³² Helena Willman-Grabowska, Ankieta personalna, 27 marca 1956... [Helena Willman-Grabowska, Personal Questionnaire, 27 March 1956...].

the Jagiellonian University that on November 6 at 12.00, a prelection for university professors will be held in the assembly hall by Bruno Müller, ss-obergruppenführer. The Nazis arrested the assembled professors [...] The first news about what happened was brought to the [Jagiellonian] Library by prof. Willman-Grabowska, who was present in the hall, however as a woman was released."³³



6) A letter from Willman-Grabowska's personal file (the Jagiellonian University Archives (reference number 619)), in which the Rector calls Prof. Helena Willman, née Grabowska, that she "being appointed on September 23, 1937, by the decree of the President of the Republic of Poland" ... a full professor of Sanskrit and Indian philology, after the break caused by the war, returned to fulfilling her duties at the Jagiellonian University on January 20, 1945."

(Photo by H. Marlewicz)

Transferring to „retirement”

On January 1, 1948, by order of Eugenia Krassowska, the deputy minister at the Ministry of Education, dated September 29, 1947, Professor Willman-Grabowska was "retired", obtaining permission to continue lecturing. Zakład Emerytalny (Pension Office) refuses to pay her pension. The refusal was based on the formal requirement of a minimum 15 years of service in order to obtain pension. In the period from January to the end of August 1948, the Jagiellonian

³³ Helena Lipska. „Biblioteka Jagiellońska w czasie okupacji 1939-1945.” *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej*, 1979, p. 132.

University authorities commissioned the scholar to conduct lectures as a “free-lance” professor with full remuneration.³⁴ Between January and September 1948, the university authorities continuously tried to make the Ministry of Education grant the scholar a permanent payment in the amount of full university professor's pension.³⁵ In mid-1948, by the decision of Krassowska, announced in *Dziennik Ustaw* (Journal of Laws), the Chair of Sanskrit and Indian Philology is renamed the Chair of Linguistics. The decision resulted in withholding payment for commissioned activities, which were the main source of Willman-Grabowska's maintenance. Let the words from the handwritten, undated letter of the Professor, addressed to the Rector of the Jagiellonian University serve as a commentary to this cruel act of the communist apparatchik:

On July 17, Dziennik Ustaw [Journal of Laws] announced the "renaming" of the Chair of Sanskrit and Indian Philology to the Chair of Linguistics. [...] When I visited [...] the Rectorate the other day, the clerk told me: "decision of Dziennik Ustaw of July 17 means that there will no longer be funds to pay for lectures, because there is no Chair". On the next day, I received a letter (7744/48, 6 August'48) from the Rectorate: [...] "due to the dissolving, etc. I suspend... further payment of remuneration to the citizen [Willman-Grabowska] as of 31 August.... Si[gned] dr. St. Skowron".

So again I was thrown out as perfectly as on January 1, 1948 [...] In my full capabilities, both scientifically and pedagogically, I am removed from work, left without any means. [...] Is this how people should behave? - Every society, every state, every human system is wasting its members, maybe even not always wanting it. But is it right? useful? The Rector will forgive me if he does not like it how it sounds. Please accept my great respect, prof. dr. H. Willman-Grabowska.

The pension was granted only after four years, from 1 October 1951, "thanks to the intervention of the Rector, the personal manager of the Jagiellonian University, and a few colleagues"³⁶, after repeated appeals filed in the Ministry of Education by the Jagiellonian University authorities and the interested party. In 1957, Willman-Grabowska was reactivated to the post of professor at the Jagiellonian University. However, due to her years, she could no longer take up classes. Yet until the last moment of her life she worked on translations, interpretation and scientific elaboration of Sanskrit literature. She worked on the tales from the

³⁴ R. Czekalska, *Helena Willman-Grabowska (1870-1957)*, in: J. Michalik (ed.), *Złota Księga Wydziału Filologicznego*. Kraków, 2000, p. 227.

³⁵ Pismo z dnia 30 kwietnia 1948 r., skierowane przez Prof. Z. Klemensiewicz, Dziekana Wydziału Humanistycznego, do Wydziału Personalnego Ministerstwa Oświaty. Teczka osobowa Archiwum UJ, sygn.. Sil 619. [A Letter of 30 April 1948, from prof. Z. Klemensiewicz, the Dean of the Department of Humanities to the Human Resources Department of the Ministry of Education (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)]

³⁶ Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego... [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor...], p. 4.

collection of *Kāthasaritsāgara* by Somadeva. The choice of 66 stories *O cnocie i niecnocie niewieściej* [On virtue and wickedness of women] was released in 1960, three years after the translator's death.

Professor Willman-Grabowska's group of pupils included the following professors and lecturers of the Jagiellonian University: Tadeusz Milewski (1906-1966), Tadeusz Pobożniak (1910-1991), and Józef Łączak (1926-1989).

The most important achievements of prof. Willman-Grabowska include the determination of the characteristics of Sanskrit in the period when it ceased to be a living language, a detailed discussion of the issue of the syntax of the locative in the Vedic language and her general research on the semantic issues of the Sanskrit language. She was interested in comparative studies in literature (motifs in Sanskrit and Greek literature) and non-linguistic influences on the formation of literary language.³⁷

Works of Helena Willman-Grabowska³⁸

The works of Professor Helena Willman-Grabowska in the field of Indology and Iranian studies are predominantly related to linguistics, historical linguistics and philology, (mainly Greek-Indian motifs), religious studies and translations from literature.³⁹ She dealt with cultural and social as well as historical and social issues. She also wrote articles on Polish studies. The most important linguistic works include the aforementioned two-part study on the syntax of the Sanskrit language entitled *Les composés nominaux dans le Śatapathabrāhmaṇa*. (1927, 1928). *Le locatif dans le Rīgveda* (1928) is a work about the locative use in the Vedic language. She wrote about the issues of general linguistics, Indo-European linguistics, and on Middle-Indian and Dravidian languages. In her texts on cultural and social issues, she presented a synthetic picture of Indian civilization, analysed the state system of India (IV-III century BC) and planned

³⁷ A. Śródka, *Uczni polscy XIX i XX stulecia...*, p. 486.

³⁸ T. Pobożniak discusses his teacher's work in: Pobożniak, T. (1958). Helena Willman-Grabowska. Wspomnienie pośmiertne. *Rocznik Orientalistyczny*, 2/26, pp. 139-144. The list of selected works by Willman-Grabowska can also be found in: I. Milewska, "Selected Bibliography of Polish Indologists connected with Sanskrit Studies in Kraków." *Cracow Indological Studies*, 1995: 301-306, and in the latest bibliography of selected works, annotated and ordered by category, to be found in the book by R. Czekalska and A. Kuczkiewicz-Fraś, *Helena Willman-Grabowska. Orientalistka-uczona-popularyzatorka...*, pp. 27-28.

³⁹ This classification was proposed by the scholar herself. See H. Willman-Grabowska. Indianistyka w Polsce i studia jej pokrewne. [Indian studies in Poland and studies related to it]. In: S. Strelcyn (Ed.), *Szkice z dziejów polskiej orientalistyki*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1957, p. 249.

to write a series of texts on the role of Europeans in India, of which she only completed one.⁴⁰ Until now is valued her semantic analysis of the word *dharma* (law, rule of law, righteousness) in which she presented the evolution of meanings of the word and the concept itself, from the oldest mentions in the Hindu tradition to the Buddhist and Jain tradition (*Evolution sémantique du mot dharma*, 1934). She authored *La mythologie brahmanique*, published in a collective work *Mythologie Asiatique Illustrée* (Paryż, 1927) and co-authored, with P. Masson-Oursel and Ph. Stern, the study entitled *L'Inde antique et la civilisation indienne* (Paris 1933). From the Russian language she translated the diaries of the Russian merchant Athanasius Nikitin, who travelled to India between 1466 and 1472. In the introduction to the book the scholar presented the situation of Deccan under Muslim rule in the fifteenth century (*Wędrówka za trzy morza*, Wrocław 1952). From Sanskrit, in addition to the aforementioned collection *O cnocie...* [On virtue...], she translated the vetāla (vampire) cycle from the *Kathasaritsāgara* collection, which she entitled *Dwadzieścia pięć opowieści wampira* [Twenty-Five Vampire Stories] (Wrocław 1956), and also excerpts from the first book of the Mahabharata published in 1957 in the Journal „Rocznik Orientalistyczny”.

Halina Marlewicz

Bibliografia

Curriculum vitae Heleny z Grabowskich Willmanowej, niedatowane (1927(?)) (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil 619). [Curriculum vitae of Helena Willman, née Grabowska, undated (probably 1927) (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)].

Curriculum vitae prof. dr Heleny Willmanowej-Grabowskiej, datowane 16 czerwca 1949 (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil 619) [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska dated 16 June 1949 (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)],

Czekalska, R. (2000). Helena Willman-Grabowska (1870-1957). In: J. Michalik (Ed.), *Złota Księga Wydziału Filologicznego*. Kraków, pp. 224-230.

⁴⁰ R. Czekalska and A. Kuczkiewicz-Fraś, *Helena Willman-Grabowska...*, p. 21.

Czekalska, R. i Kuczkiewicz-Fraś, A. (Eds). (2014). *Helena Willman-Grabowska: orientalistka – uczona – popularyzatorka*. [Helena Willman-Grabowska: Orientalist – Scholar – Populariser] Kraków: Księgarnia Akademicka.

Drogoszewski, A. (1934). Polski Związek Nauczycielski 1905-1917, [the Polish Teachers' Union 1905-1917]]. In: B. Nawroczyński (Ed.), *Nasza walka o szkołę polską 1901-1917. Opracowania, wspomnienia, dokumenty*. [Our Fight for the Polish school (1901-1917). Studies, memories, documents]. Vol. II, Warszawa: Komitet obchodu 25-lecia walki o szkołę polską, 1934, pp. 244-264.

Lipska, H. (1979). Biblioteka Jagiellońska w czasie okupacji 1939-1945. *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej*, XXIX, pp. 131-147.

Milewska, I. (1995). Selected Bibliography of Polish Indologists connected with Sanskrit Studies in Kraków. *Cracow Indological Studies*, 1, pp. 301-306.

M. Mossoczowa, Pierwsza Profesorka na Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim [The First Lady-Professor at the Jagiellonian University]. *Bluszcz. Społeczno-literacki Ilustrowany Tygodnik Kobiety*. Warszawa, 4 January 1930, nr 1.

http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/applet?mimetype=image%2Fxdjvu&sec=false&handler=djvu_html5&content_url=%2FContent%2F103033%2FBluszcz+1930+nr1.djvu&p=7

Orsza-Radlińska, H. (1934). Koło Wychowawców [The Circle of Educators]. In: B. Nawroczyński (Ed.), *Nasza walka o szkołę polską (1901-1917). Opracowania, wspomnienia, dokumenty*. [Our Fight for the Polish school (1901-1917). Studies, memories, documents]. Vol. II, Warszawa: Komitet obchodu 25-lecia walki o szkołę polską, pp. 76-114.

Orsza-Radlińska, H. (1934). Towarzystwo Pedagogiczne [Pedagogical Society]. In: B. Nawroczyński (Ed.), *Nasza walka o szkołę polską (1901-1917). Opracowania, wspomnienia, dokumenty*. [Our Fight for the Polish school (1901-1917). Studies, memories, documents]. Vol. II. Warszawa: Komitet obchodu 25-lecia walki o szkołę polską, pp. 114-122.

Pismo Rady Wydziału Filologicznego UJ do Ministerstwa Szkolnictwa Wyższego z dn. 22.02.1957, (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil. 619 [Letter from the Council of the Faculty of Philology of the Jagiellonian University to the Ministry of Higher Education, dated 22.02.1957, (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)].

Pismo z dnia 30 kwietnia 1948 r., skierowane przez Prof. Z. Klemensiewicza, Dziekana Wydziału Humanistycznego, do Wydziału Personalnego Ministerstwa Oświaty. (Teczka osobowa Archiwum UJ, sygn. Sil 619). [A Letter of 30 April 1948, from prof. Z. Klemensiewicz, the Dean of the Department of Humanities to the Human Resources Department of the Ministry of Education (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)].

Pobożniak, T. (1958). Helena Willman-Grabowska. Wspomnienie pośmiertne [Helena Willman-Grabowska: Obituary]. *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* 2/26, pp. 139-144. Kopia litograficzna pisma ręcznego.

Rodzice Obywatele! [Inc.:] Rząd rosyjski czuje, iż grunt mu się z pod nóg usuwa i chcąc ratować położenie, kokietuje mglistymi obietnicami wszystkich od których się spodziewa bardziej stanowczego wystąpienia [...] : 27.I.1905 r. / Koło Wychowawców. Druk ulotny. Kopia litograficzna pisma ręcznego. Biblioteka Narodowa. Bibliografia pism ulotnych rew. 1905-1907 poz. 109. Magazun Druków Ulotnych, Sygn. DŻS IA 4h Cim. <https://polona.pl/item/rodzice-obywatele-inc-rzad-rosyjski-czuje-iz-grunt-mu-sie-z-pod-nog-usuwa-i-chcac,OTcwMzc1Nw/0/#info:metadata>

Skarżyński, M. (2008). Nieznane listy Jana Baudouina de Courtenay do Jana M. Rozwadowskiego [Unknown Letters of Jan Baudouin de Courtenay to Jan M. Rozwadowski]. *LingVaria*, 1(5), pp. 205-232.

Śródka, A. (1998). *Uczeni polscy XIX i XX stulecia* (Tomy IV: S-Ż) [*Polish Scientists of the 19 and 20 century* (Vol. IV: S-Ż)]. Warszawa: Aries.

Milewski, T., Pobożniak, T. (1964). Historia językoznawstwa ogólnego, indoeuropejskiego i filologii indyjskiej w Uniwersytecie Jagiellońskim. In: A. Zaręba, W. Taszycki (Eds.), *Wydział filologiczny Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Historia katedr*. Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński, pp. 239-286.

Tytko, M. M. (2014). Mjr prof. Stefan Szuman w walce o niepodległość Polski (1939-1945) [Major Professor Stefan Szuman fighting for Poland's independence (1939-1945)]. *Sowiniec* (44), DOI: 10.12797/Sowiniec.25.2014.44.04, pp. 51-84.

Willman-Grabowska, H. (1956). Ankieta personalna (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil. 619). [Helena Willman-Grabowska, Personal Questionnaire, 27 March 1956, Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619].

Willman-Grabowska, H. (1957). Indianistyka w Polsce i studia jej pokrewne. In: S. Strelcyn (Ed.), *Szkice z dziejów polskiej orientalistyki*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, pp. 237-25.

Życiorys Prof. dr Heleny Willman-Grabowskiej, Profesora zwyczajnego w st[anie] sp[oczynku] Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Kraków, marzec 1956 (Archiwum UJ,teczka osobowa, sygn. Sil 619) [Curriculum Vitae of Prof. H. Willman-Grabowska, retired full professor of the Jagiellonian University. Written in Krakow in March 1956, (Jagiellonian University Archives, personal file, reference number Sil 619)].

Internet sources:

http://pauart.pl/app/artwork?id=BZS_RKPS_12519_k_118

<https://polona.pl/item/rodzice-obywatele-inc-rzad-rosyjski-czuje-iz-grunt-mu-sie-z-pod-nog-usuwa-i-chcac,OTcwMzc1Nw/0/#info:metadata>

http://www.wbc.poznan.pl/dlibra/applet?mimetype=image%2Fxdjvu&sec=false&handler=djvu_html5&content_url=%2FContent%2F103033%2FBluszcz+1930+nr1.djvu&p=7

<https://jbc.bj.uj.edu.pl/dlibra/publication/45132/edition/39573/content?ref=desc>