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Academic degrees and *veniam legendi* in Poland (1918–1939)
(Part II)

Summary

There were many important tasks that Poland had to address after it regained independence in 1918. One was the ordering of the matters of higher education. This included taking over control over establishments of higher education which had earlier functioned in partitioned Poland under a foreign rule, as well as establishing study rules and academic regulations. The legislative actions had to be taken step by step, as further portions of Polish territories had been regained, to ensure students who had commenced studies in partitioned Poland their continuation under new, Polish conditions, and to enable validation of examinations already taken, and in the case of graduates, nostrification of their diplomas.

Unlike as it was in the case of earning lower degrees (of a *licencjat*, physician, or *magister*) and higher degrees (of a doctor), a completion of habilitation did not result in earning an academic degree. The habilitation process consisted of three steps: (i) submission of a print-out of a habilitation thesis, (ii) discussion on the habilitation thesis, and (iii) presentation of a habilitation lecture to the faculty members or members of another statutory body of a state institution of higher education. Following positive opinions of the reviewers of the thesis, the Council of the Faculty (or another competent organ of the institution) would resolve to grant the habilitation candidate an exclusive right to lecture, so called *veniam legendi*, and a title of a *docent*. The acquisition of that right did not tie the candidate to the school conferring the right, or compel him to lecture, but resignation from the right to lecture resulted in the expiry of such right, which nevertheless was capable to be restored without the need to go through the habilitation process again.

A high education institution could offer a *docent* employment as a paid docent, which required proper nomination and appointment by the School's competent authority, or contract with the docent the *veniam legendi* as a private lecturer (*docent*).

Habilitation was not recognised as an academic degree and consequently nostrification of the *veniam legendi* was not possible.

Keywords: recognition of final university examinations – nostrification of academic degrees and diplomas – habilitation – Poland in the interwar period