

An aerial photograph of the New York City skyline, featuring numerous skyscrapers and the Hudson River. The image is overlaid with a dark, semi-transparent layer. The title 'HISTORY OF POLAND' is written in large, bold, yellow capital letters across the center. Below the title is a short, thick white horizontal line.

HISTORY OF POLAND

The Legend of Lech, Czech and Rus

Over a thousand years ago, there were three Slav brothers wandering with their tribes through the lands of forests and fields stretching between two large rivers, Oder in the west and Dnieper in the east, in search of the best place to settle. One day, after months of weary travel, a beautiful sight appeared before their eyes: on a hill there stood a huge oak tree with a nest between its branches. From the nest a mighty white eagle soared into the sky. Lech was amazed by the view and considered it as a sign from the gods for him and his people. He decided to settle there and chose the white eagle with its wings spread wide against the sunset sky for their emblem. Soon they built a town which they called Gniezno (a “nest” in the Slavic language). The town became the capital of their nation and the first capital of Poland. And so the three brothers separated: Czech decided to go south and Rus chose the east where they started their own countries.

Important dates

996

Mieszko I, (a member of the Piast dynasty, the creator of the Polish state) was baptised at the occasion of his marriage to the Czech princess Doubrava. What follows was the christening of the previously pagan country.



997

Bishop Adalbert dies. St Adalbert – the bishop of Prague decided to bring to Christianity to pagan Prussians living in Northern Poland. He founded Gdansk although he was later killed on that mission. His remains were transferred to Gniezno. Adalbert became the first Polish saint and three years later the first archbishopric was established in Gniezno.

1226

MAZOVIAN PRINCE CONRAD INVITED THE ORDER OF TEUTONIC KNIGHTS TO NORTHERN POLAND IN ORDER TO GAIN THEIR HELP AGAINST THE ADAMANTLY PAGAN PRUSSIAN (A BALDIC TRIBE). THE KNIGHTS WERE NOT VERY SUCCESSFUL DURING THE CRUSADES AND IT WAS IN POLAND (AND THE KALININGRAD ENCLAVE), WHERE THEIR DOMINIONS FLOURISHED. TEUTONIC KNIGHTS BECAME LATER A DANGEROUS CHALLENGE FOR THE EQUALLY EXPANSIVE POLISH STATE.

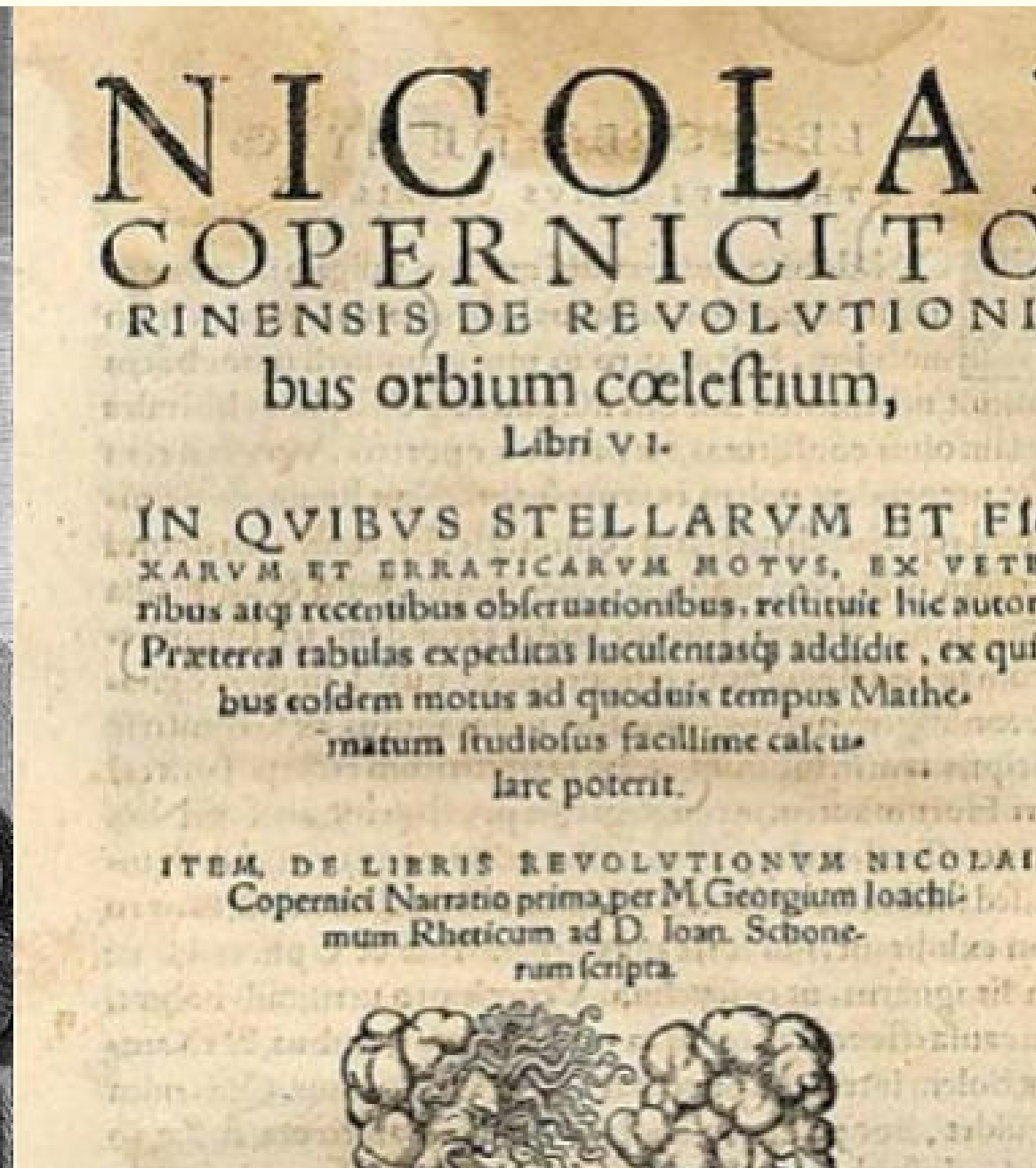
1410

ONE OF THE BIGGEST MEDIEVAL BATTLES WAS FOUGHT AT GRUNWALD, WHERE THE JOINT POLISH AND LITHUANIAN FORCES STOPPED THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE TEUTONIC KNIGHTS.



1543

The Copernican Revolution. Polish scholar Nicolaus Copernicus (Mikolaj Kopernik) published *De Revolutionibus*, he proposed the heliocentric theory, that the Earth rotates on an axis, and goes round the sun once in a year. In the 16th century it was still widely accepted that the Earth was the centre of the universe. The heliocentric theory was later proved by Galileo Galilei.



1652

The Liberum Veto introduced – a manifestation of the great freedoms, which were enjoyed by the Polish nobility. One vote could obstacle the enactment of any bill in the Polish Parliament. The Political system fiound itself in a prolonged crisis causing Poland to experiment with the republican form of government. Eight per cent of population were often impoverished nobility and it is estimated that 120,000 noblemen had no land or property.

1655

The Beginning of the Swedish Wars (the so called “Deluge”). Charles X (Karol X) takes Warsaw and Krakow. Warsaw was captured and recaptured several times and 80% of its population was killed. Czestochowa took a miraculous resistance and finally Peace was restored in Oliwa in 1660.



1683

The legendary Battle of Vienna (the second siege of Vienna). Polish King John III (Jan III. Sobieski) managed to crush the Turks (Kara Mustafa), save the beleaguered city, and finally kill off the expansion of the Ottoman Empire.



1772

The first partition of Poland: the border areas were divided among Russia, Prussia and Austria.



1791

The New Constitution was (May 3) granted by King Stanislaus Poniatowski. It was second achievement of such kind. Immediately after the American constitution.

USTAWA RZĄDOWA.

PRAWO UCHWALONE.

Dnia 3. Maja, Roku 1791.

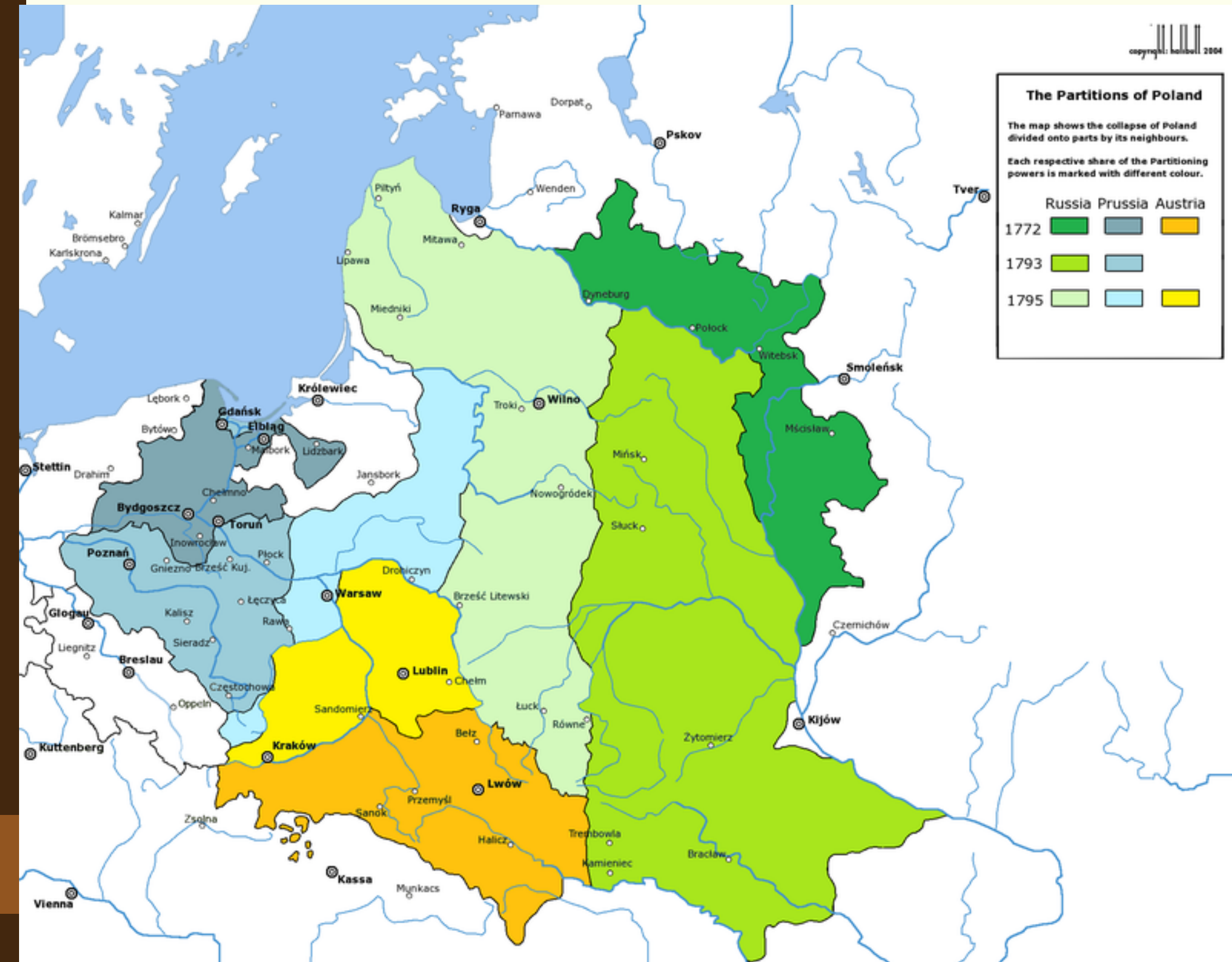


W WARSZAWIE,
w Drukarni Uprzywileiowanej M. GRÖLLA,
Księgarza Nadwornego J. K. Mci.



1794

The Third Partition of Poland, Poland was wiped off the map.



1914

First World War begins. Most fights take place on the eastern front fought on the territory of the future Poland (Galicia).

1918

November 11th Poland was proclaimed as an independent country.



1939

.September 1st, Adolf Hitler's Nazi's begin bombing Westerplatte, Gdansk and WW II begins.



1945

EXTRA THE STARS AND STRIPES EXTRA

VICTORY

Nazis Reveal Surrender To Western Allies, Russia

The unconditional surrender of Germany to the Western Allies and Soviet Russia was announced by the German high command yesterday morning.

The official announcements from the Allied governments are expected to come simultaneously from Washington, London and Moscow today.

The British Ministry of Information, proclaiming that today would be 'Victory in Europe Day,' said Prime Minister Churchill would make 'an official announcement' at 3 PM.

President Truman said he had agreed with the British and Russian governments that no surrender proclamation would be made 'until simultaneous announcements could be made by the three governments.'

King George VI of England sent Gen. Eisenhower a cablegram last night

Nazis Still Fight Reds At Prague

Prayer, Tears, Laughter - The World Celebrates

Prague, May 8 (AP) - The world yesterday celebrated the news of the unconditional surrender of Germany to the Western Allies and Soviet Russia. In Prague, the city of the 1945 liberation, the news was greeted with a mixture of prayer, tears and laughter. The city's streets were filled with people celebrating the end of the war. The news was also greeted with a mixture of prayer, tears and laughter. The city's streets were filled with people celebrating the end of the war.

congratulating him and his armies on the 'complete and crushing victory' in Europe.

The Associated Press broke the news of the surrender in a story from Rheims, France, that the Allies had announced Germany's surrender at 0241 hours yesterday morning. It said the surrender took place in the little red school house that is Gen. Eisenhower's headquarters.

Col. Gen. Gustaf Jodl, German army chief of staff, signed for Germany, it was reported.

The Associated Press story apparently was premature. From dispatches coming from Washington and London, it appeared that negotiations were being made to postpone the surrender simultaneously in the three capitals where the news broke. This seemed apparent from President Truman's statement and news stories from London saying that Truman, Churchill and Stalin had conferred by telephone during the day.

Supreme Headquarters said it authorized no such story to be sent out. However, the American Broadcasting Station in Europe reported by the office of War Information. The news station of Radio Moscow also reported the surrender. (Continued on Page 2)

Poland finally liberated by the Russian Red Army, the exiled government returns from London, but the country finds itself gradually under the Soviet dominance.

dziennik Zachodni

Katowice, środa dnia 9-go maja 1945 r.

Koniec wojny

Władztwa ustały we wtorek 8. V. o godz. 23,59

ich, 8-miu milionach, nad wielki dzień, która rozpę-

tana została od Afryki do Bieguna Północnego, od Francji do Włogi i na wszystkich oceanach świata, została w Europie za-

żegnana. Katastrofa dziejowa, która kosztowała tyle ofiar, minęła. Minęły lata obozów koncentracyjnych, minął terror

gestapowski, minęło panowanie „nadmudzi”. W dniu 7. maja 1945 r. o godzinie 2 min. 41 czasu środko-

wo-europejskiego podpisano w małym budynku szkolnym w Reims dokument kapitulacji, którym Niemcy oddają się na łaskę i niełaskę w ręce ZSRR, Anglii, Ameryki i Francji.

Dzień zwycięstwa

Dzień 8. maja 1945 roku — dzień zwycięstwa

1955

The huge Palace of Culture (Stalin's apologetic gift to Poland) was completed.



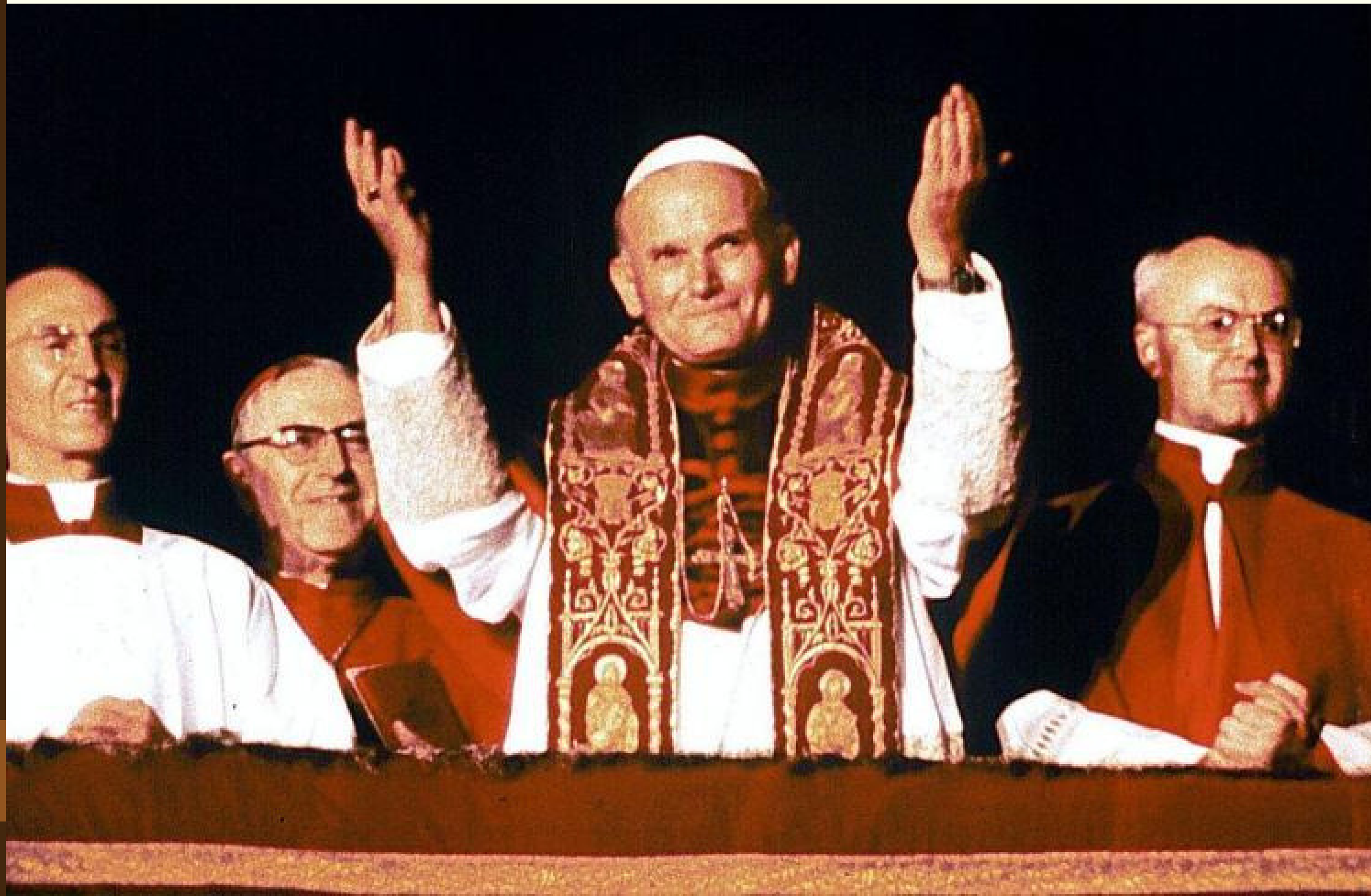
1967

Rolling Stones play at the Palace of Culture in Warsaw.



1978

The Bishop of Krakow, Karol Wojtyla is elected as Pope John Paul II, becoming the first non-Italian pope since the 15th century.



1980

A small strike in Gdansk spreads to the whole country. The Solidarity (Solidarnosc) trade-union movement began in the Gdansk shipyards. The movement has both political and economic goals and amazingly gained 10 million members,



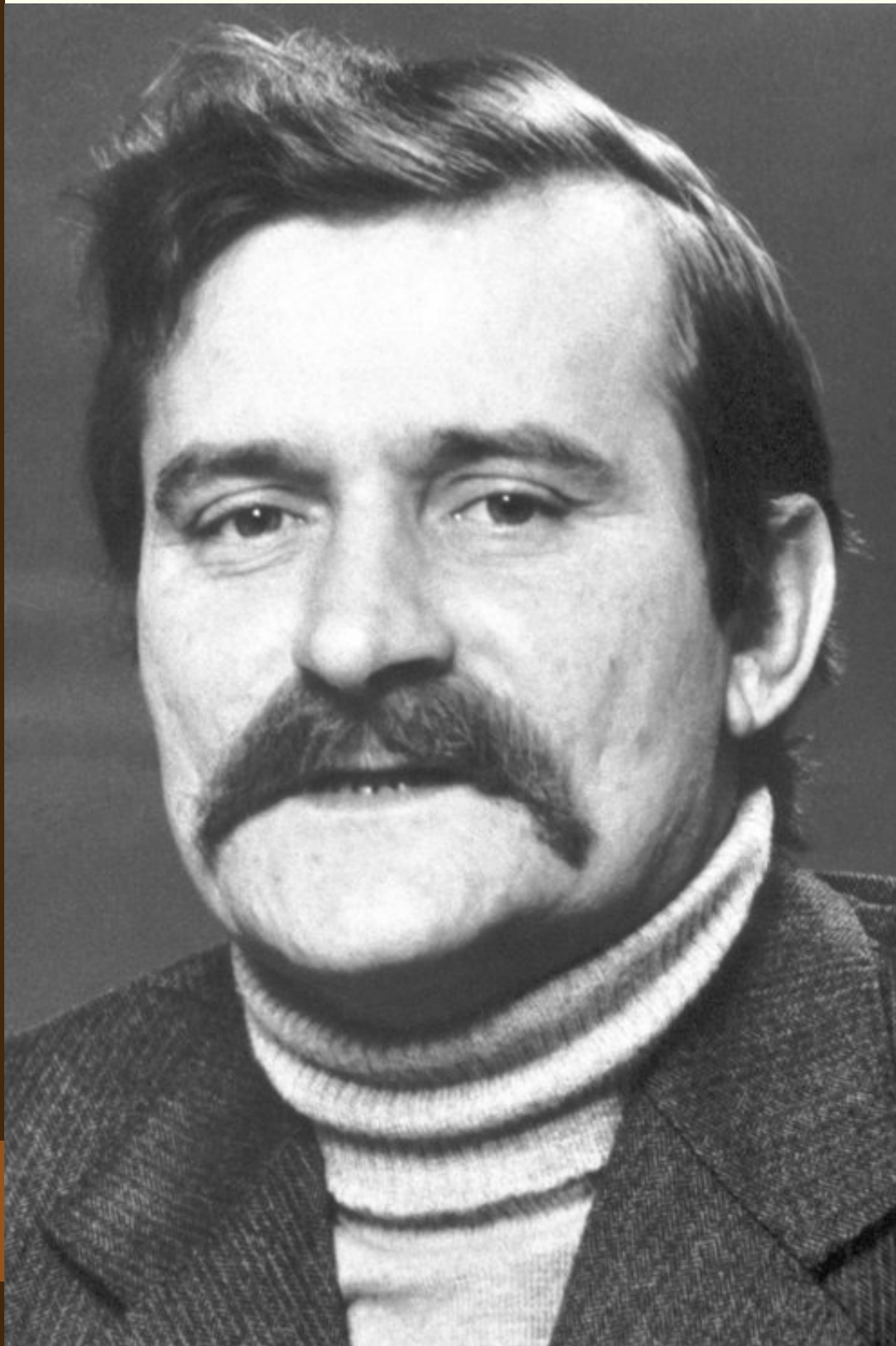
1981

December 13th: Martial Law was declared by Communist President General Wojciech Jaruzelski. A Curfew was introduced and the army exercises control over the country. The strong suppressive check on public and social life in Poland begins.



1983

The Solidarity leader Lech Walesa received the Nobel Peace Prize.



1989

“Round table” negotiations are one of symbolic end of communism.



1991

The Warsaw Pact dissolved, and The Cold War is officially ended.

1998

Poland accepted into NATO.



2004

May 1st. Poland joins the European Union, along with nine other candidate countries.





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Made by:
Sandra Heft
&
Sandra Styn



I LICEUM OGÓLNOKSZTAŁCĄCE
im. Stefana Żeromskiego
w Pucku