



Quaestiones Medii Aevi Novae

vol. 29 + 2024

THE IMAGES OF EUROPE

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I. THE IMAGES OF EUROPE

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EUROPE IN THE IMAGINATIVE GEOGRAPHY OF THE LATIN MIDDLE AGES



Mater Europa - Mother Europe. It would seem that this phrase does not sound very “medieval”. *Mater Ecclesia*, *mater Polonia* – these kinds of *mater* metaphors would be more fitting for medieval Europe as we know it. And in fact, they are, because they can be found in the sources much more often than “mother Europe”.

But she also appeared, and in a geographical sense, not a mythological one - as part of the world, not the parent of Minos. According to the *Annals of Quedlinburg*, Roman Emperor Henry II, due to a raging plague, returned in 1022 from Italy almost without knights, “exceptis his, quos sibi mater Europa occurendo amiserat”.¹ We will return to the *Annals of Quedlinburg* later. First, however, it will be necessary to go back to antiquity, because in it, as in the case of most of the imaginative geography of the medieval Latin Europe,² a number of elements that make up the image of Europe at that time have their roots.

¹ *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. M. Giese, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum separatim editi [further: MGH SS rer. Germ.] 72, Hannover 2004, p. 569.

² By imaginative geography, I mean a set of geographic imagery that functions in a particular community, believed to be true by at least a majority of its members and confirmed by recognized authorities in that community.

One of them was the etymology of the Europe's name. The name "Europe" appeared in geographical terms as early as the 6th century BC, in the writings of Anaximander, and Hecataeus of Miletus. Originally, it denoted an area of Greek cultural and political influence, mainly the Peloponnese and the southern part of the Balkans, and was only gradually extended to other areas.³ Its actual origin has not yet received a clear explanation, but in Greek mythology there was the well-known figure of Europa, the daughter of the Phoenician king Agenor. The most famous episode in her life was her abduction to Crete by Zeus, who took the form of a large bull, and later begat with her King Minos and his siblings. As far back as ancient times, the interpretation that Europe as a part of the world was named after her became widespread. It is worth noting here, by the way, that neither ancient nor medieval authors called Europe a continent. This name appeared only at the beginning of the 16th century, and before that the term *pars mundi* was used. In this publication I will use the word continent interchangeably, but it should be remembered that in this context it is an anachronism.⁴

The Middle Ages took over the story of the kidnapping of Europa along with the rest of the cultural heritage of the Greco-Roman antiquity. The associated explanation of the name of the continent became a standard, repeated in countless texts over the centuries. The main intermediary in this case was Isidore of Seville. In the most important encyclopaedia of the Middle Ages, *Etymologies*, written in the 620s, he wrote: "Europa quippe Agenoris regis Libyae filia fuit, quam Iovis ab Africa raptam Cretam advexit, et partem tertiam orbis ex eius nomine appellavit" (For Europa was the daughter of Agenor, king of Libya, whom Jupiter brought to Crete from Africa, and called a third part of the world from her name).⁵ For the next thousand years, these words were quoted almost verbatim or paraphrased many times in chronicles, geographical descriptions, and encyclopaedias, like those of Bartholomew the Englishman and Vincent of Beauvais.

Of course, not every author writing about the origin of the name Europe recalled the story, and there were alternative proposals for etymology. Honorius Augustodunensis at the beginning of the 12th century wrote in his *Imago mundi*: "Europa ab Europe rege, vel ab Europa filia Agenoris est nominata" (Europa was named after Europos the king, or from Europa the daughter

3 J. Strzelczyk, *Odkrywanie Europy*, Poznań 2000², p. 10.

4 P. Gautier-Dalché, *Representations géographiques de l'Europe - septentrionale, centrale et Orientale – au Moyen Age*, in: *Europa im Weltbild des Mittelalters. Kartographische Konzepte*, ed. I. Baumgärtner, H. Kugler, Berlin 2008, p. 65.

5 *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum siue originum libri XX*, vol. 1-2, ed. W.M. Lindsay, Oxford 1911, 14, 4, 1 (unnumbered pages).

of Agenor).⁶ After which he moved on to discussing individual European lands. The king mentioned by him was Europos or Europus, son of the Macedonian eponym Makedon and grandson of Zeus. However, Europos was probably too little known a figure to displace Agenor's popular and attractive daughter from the imagined world, although he occasionally reappeared as an eponym of a *pars mundi* in some sources, such as on a world map from the 14th century Abraham Cresques' so-called *Catalan Atlas*.⁷ Even more isolated remained the 13th century attempt at etymology known from the Berchtold (Bernhard) of Kremsmünster's history of the Kremsmünster Abbey: "Europa, id est bona ripa." Such a meaning of the continent's name, in his opinion, was related to the multiplicity of European rivers and the abundance of tasty fish living in them.⁸

In the quoted statement of Isidore, there was another element taken from ancient geography that became integral to thinking about Europe in the Middle Ages and later: the view that it constituted one of the three parts of the world – *partes mundi* or, as Isidore of Seville put it, *partes orbis*.⁹ Together, these three parts – Asia, Europe, and Africa – formed the ecumene, or the world inhabited by humans. The ecumene, usually referred to in Latin medieval sources as *nostra habitabilis*, was considered by ancient Greek and Roman authors, as well as their medieval followers, to be a kind of great island, located in the immeasurable waters of the Ocean in the northern temperate zone. Indeed, the surface of the globe was traditionally divided into five latitudinal belts, called zones (*zoniae*): around the equator stretched a torrid zone (*zona torrida*), north and south of it lay two temperate zones (*zoniae temperatae*), and both poles were surrounded by frigid zones (*zoniae frigidae*). It was believed that only temperate zones were habitable for humans.¹⁰

The division of the ecumene into three parts became a standard for thinking about the world, reproduced in the Middle Ages in countless encyclopaedias, chronicles, and other texts. Their mutual positioning was put in synthetic form by Isidore of Seville, and his words were also repeated and paraphrased many times: "Quas tres partes orbis veteres non aequaliter diviserunt. Nam Asia a meridie per orientem usque ad septentrionem pervenit; Europa vero a septentrione usque ad occidentem; atque inde Africa ab occidente usque ad

6 Honorius Augustodunensis, *Imago mundi*, ed. V.I.J. Flint, "Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge" 49 (1983), I, 21, p. 59.

7 K. Oschema, *Der Europa-Begriff im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter. Zwischen geographischen Weltbild und kultureller Konnotation*, "Jahrbuch für Europäische Geschichte" 2 (2001), p. 203, footnote 56.

8 Bernardi, *ut videtur, Liber de origine et ruina monasterii Cremifanensis*, ed. G. Waitz, in: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* [further: MGH], *Scriptores* 25, Hannover 1880, p. 642.

9 Isidori..., 14, 2, 2.

10 Cf. E. Edson, *Mapping Time and Space. How Medieval Mapmakers Viewed Their World*, London 1997, p. 7.

meridiem" (The ancients did not divide the world equally into these three parts. For Asia extends from the south through the east to the north; whereas Europe from the north to the west; and Africa from the west to the south).¹¹ Less frequently, we can find examples of a different division of the ecumene into two halves - east and west, also having ancient roots. It was mentioned, too, by Isidore, who wrote in a following sentence of his *Etymologiae*: "Unde evidentior orbem dimidium duae tenent, Europa et Africa, alium vero dimidium sola Asia; sed ideo istae duae partes factae sunt, quia inter utramque ab Oceano mare Magnum ingreditur, quod eas intersecat. Quapropter si in duas partes orientis et occidentis orbem divides, Asia erit in una, in altera vero Europa et Africa" (Therefore, it is clear that one half of the world is occupied by these two: Europe and Africa, and the other half is occupied by Asia alone, but for this reason these two parts were made, that from the side of the Ocean the Great Sea enters between them, which separates them from each other. Therefore, if you divide the world into two parts, east and west, Asia will be on one side, while Europe and Africa will be on the other side).¹²

A slightly different approach to the same question was proposed by Paulus Orosius. At the beginning of the geographical description in his *History Against the Pagans*, he noted that the Ancients (*maiores nostri*) divided the world into three parts, but according to some there are only two: Asia and Europe, to which Africa can also be added.¹³ Eight centuries later, in very similar words, Otto of Freisingen repeated this thought in his chronicle *Historia de duabus civitatibus*, further explaining that the addition of Africa to Europe is justified *propter sui parvitatem*, and its status as a separate part of the world is due solely to its separation from the other ones by the seas.¹⁴

Most authors writing in Otto's time did not share his opinion on the size of parts of the world. It was openly disputed, for example, by Gervase of Tilbury. According to him, such is the view of "some" (*quidam*), but it should be rejected because it does not agree with the tradition regarding dividing the ecumene among the sons of Noah.¹⁵ Europe and Africa were each to

11 Isidori..., 14, 2, 2. As an example of a paraphrase see the introductory sentence of the Honorius Augustodunensis' description of Europe: *Asia a septentrione per orientem usque ad meridiem, Europa ab occidente usque ad septentrionem, Affrica a meridie usque ad occidentem extenditur*, Honorius Augustodunensis, *Imago...*, I, 7, p. 52. As we can see, Honorius only changed the order in which the sides of the world are listed.

12 Isidori..., 14, 2, 3.

13 Orosii *Historiarum adversus paganos libri VII*. Orose *Histoires (Contre les Païens)*, ed. M.-P. Arnaud-Lindet, vol. 1: Livres 1-3, Paris 1990, I, 2, 1, p. 13.

14 Ottonis *episcopi Frisingensis Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus*, ed. A. Hofmeister, MGH SS rer. Germ. 45, Hannover-Leipzig 1912, p. 37.

15 Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia Imperialia. Recreation for an Emperor*, ed. S.E. Banks, J.W. Binns, Oxford 2002, II, 2, p. 176.

occupy half of the western half of the habitable world. It is no coincidence that the first known, individual map of Europe, compiled in the early 12th century by Lambert of Saint Omer, is entitled *Europa mundi pars quarta*, which in this context should be translated as “Europe - a quarter of the world.” According to Hartmut Kugler, the specific appearance of the continent on this map is a deliberate mnemotechnic trick. The shape of a slice of a circle alludes to Europe’s place within the ecumene and its proportion to the rest of the world. The resemblance of this shape to a human hand, with peculiar “peninsula-fingers” in the east, was intended to make it easier to remember the location of individual countries and peoples and their relationship to the Carolingian empire marked with a red line.¹⁶

Europe had a similar appearance as a quarter of a circle, though usually more simplified, on many world maps of the encyclopaedic-symbolic type that dominated in the Middle Ages. However, this does not mean that according to people living in the Middle Ages, their continent really had this shape. Of course, we don’t know what thoughts appeared in the minds of persons looking at maps, but certainly those better educated and familiar with the geographical knowledge of the time realized that it was just a matter of cartographic convention. It was enough to compare the look of Europe on diverse types of maps - ecumene maps of the so-called T-O type and hemispheric (zonal) maps, sometimes even included in the same codex.¹⁷ Europe was still looking different on detailed *mappaemundi* such as the so-called *Cottoniana*, or large Hereford map. A common feature of them all was the conventional, simplified form of the European coastline. There were also maps on which the shape of the continent was not marked at all, only the choro- and/or ethnonymes. This was due to the very essence of this kind of maps. “Its [*mappamundi*] spatial organization is dynamic, representing the significance of places rather their size or distance”.¹⁸ The map was to provide a general representation of the mutual location of the important places and the symbolism, meanings and narratives associated with them, not to depict the actual shapes of the lands.

16 H. Kugler, *Europa pars quarta. Der Teil und das ganze im ‘Liber floridus’*, in: *Europa im Weltbild*, pp. 56-59.

17 There is no single, generally accepted classification system for medieval maps. On different classifications system proposals of the medieval encyclopaedic-symbolical maps see: D. Woodward, *Medieval mappaemundi*, in: *The History of Cartography*, vol. 1: *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, ed. J.B. Harley, D. Woodward, Chicago 1987, pp. 294-299; E. Edson, *Mapping Time...*, pp. 2-9; D. Terkla, N. Millea, *Preface*, in: *A Critical Companion to English ‘mappae mundi’ of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*, ed. D. Terkla, N. Millea, Woodbridge 2019, pp. xvii-xviii.

18 E. Edson, *The World Map 1300-1492. The Persistence of Tradition and Transformation*, Baltimore 2007, p. 18.

The adoption of a cartographic convention based on the T-O scheme and its modifications have led to a situation unique in the entire global history of cartography.¹⁹ Ever since people began making maps, it has been the norm to expose “one’s” place in the world by placing it in the centre. In the oldest known map of the world the central place is occupied by the Euphrates - the main river of the Babylonian empire, where the map was created.²⁰ The Islamic world took centre stage on medieval Arab maps, China on Chinese maps, and so on. Modern European or North American maps, starting with the invention of the Mercator projection, also show the world usually from a Europocentric or a broadly Western perspective.²¹ Conversely, on European medieval world maps, the cartographer’s own place in the world was pushed to the margins. On the maps of ecumene Europe was most often placed in the lower left corner, while the Mediterranean area, especially the Holy Land, took a central position.

In the High Middle Ages, nautical charts began to appear in southern Europe, which represented a radically different way of constructing cartographic space than the encyclopaedic-symbolic maps that dominated at the time. Their makers shared the modern understanding of the veracity of cartographic image, based on the mathematical accuracy of the representation of the shapes and locations of geographical objects, rather than showing the meaning of the world.²² The nautical charts were the first medieval cartographic images (in addition to the aforementioned Lambert map) in which Europe occupied a central position and completely dominated the concept of space. Even on the earliest of them, the shapes of most European coasts are perfectly recognizable. What is striking, however, is the difference between the accuracy of the representation of the southern and northern parts of the continent. The precisely plotted, name-filled Mediterranean coastline contrasts with the conventional

19 J.L. Smith, *Europe’s Confused Transmutation: The Realignment of Moral Cartography in Juan de la Cosa’s Mappa Mundi (1500)*, “European Review of History: Revue européenne d’histoire” 21 (2014) 6, p. 806.

20 A.R. Millard, *Cartography in the Ancient Near East*, in: *The History of Cartography*, vol. 1, pp. 111-112.

21 M. Wintle, “Europe as Seen from the Outside: A Brief Visual Survey”, in: *Imagining Europe: Europe and European Civilisation As Seen from its Margins and by the Rest of the World, in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, ed. M. Wintle, Brussels 2008, p. 23.

22 The origins of nautical charts remain a matter of debate. In modern historiography, the prevailing view is that this type of map was born in the 13th, or as early as the 12th century in southern Europe, probably in Italy, as a consequence of the intensive development of Mediterranean shipping carried out by Venetian and Genoese sailors in particular, as a form of graphical representation of data collected in written instructions for sailors called portolans, cf. E. Edson, *The World Map*, pp. 40-47; J.A. Gaspar, *The ‘Liber de existencia riveriarum’ (c. 1200) and the Birth of Nautical Cartography*, “Imago Mundi” 71 (2018), 1, pp. 1-21.

shaped, almost empty Baltic coasts. Such a situation remained unchanged until the 16th century.²³

The new type of cartographic image did not immediately substitute, however, encyclopaedic-symbolic maps. Throughout the late medieval period, the two conventions of representing geographic space - the "traditional" cartography of meaning and the new cartography of measurement - were seen as complementary forms of representing the world, rather than mutually exclusive alternatives. An example is Andrea Bianco's atlas of 1436, in which a set of nautical charts of the Mediterranean was complemented by a nautical chart of the whole Europe and two maps of the world: an encyclopaedic-symbolic one and a Ptolemaic one. Apparently, the cartographer felt that only such a set allows for a complete picture of the world.²⁴ The last of Bianco's maps represents another type of map that appeared in Europe in the 15th century, included in manuscripts and printed editions of the *Geography* of Claudius Ptolemy. Ptolemy's work did not include instructions for making a separate map of all of Europe, but only a general map of the world and a set of maps of individual European lands. On the original maps created according to the recommendations of the Alexandrine scholar, the continent had a recognizable, although not very accurate, shape, amended over time on the so-called new maps (*tabulae modernae*) added to subsequent editions of the *Geography* and fifteenth-century maps of the world of the so-called transitional type.²⁵

Only based on this new way of thinking about geographic space and its representation was it possible to reflect on the shape of Europe and the rest of the world. A vivid imagination was able to perceive human figures on nautical charts, depicted by Opicinus de Canistris in his fantastic map-paintings of the late 13th and early 14th centuries.²⁶ Ptolemaic cartography, on the other hand, became an inspiration for an unknown scholar of the Cracow

23 Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken assumed that this was the result of deliberate actions by the Hanseatic League, which blocked cartographic surveys of the Baltic in order to make life difficult for competitors. Only the collapse of the Hanseatic League's position in the 16th century opened the way to the Baltic for Dutch and English merchants, which resulted in the creation of maps of the basin made by them, A.-D. von den Brincken, *Die kartographische Darstellung Nordeuropas durch italienische und malloquinische Portolanenzeichner im 14. und in der ersten Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, "Hansische Geschichtsblätter" 92 (1974), pp. 53-54. However, perhaps we are dealing with the effect of a random coincidence in time between the decline of the Hanseatic League and the development of cartography in the northern part of Europe.

24 E. Edson, *The World Map...*, pp. 1-10.

25 The most important and still most up-to-date work on the forms of reception of *Geography* in Western Europe in the 15th century is: P. Gautier-Dalché, *La Géographie de Ptolémée en Occident (IVe-XVIe siècle)*, Turnhout 2009, pp. 143-288.

26 On Opicinus' maps against the broader background of his work see K. Whittington, *Body-Worlds: Opicinus de Canistris and the Medieval Cartographic Imagination*, Toronto 2014.

Academy at the end of the 15th century. Some Cracow geographic commentaries of the period included the "Europe in sua figura descriptio et satrap-eyarum eius generalis figuracio" - a comparison of the shape of Europe to a dragon, whose individual body parts corresponded to the various lands, as depicted on a Ptolemaic world map.²⁷ The head of the European dragon covered, according to the anonymous author, the area from the North Pole beyond the island of Tile (Thule), where a wild people called *Vilde-lappin* (probably the Sami) live.²⁸ Its throat was Livonia, while its wings were two islands: the left Hibernia (Ireland) and the right Albion or England. Its legs, separated by the Adriatic Sea, extended to the Mediterranean Sea. One leg was formed by the Peloponnese or Macedonia and the other by the territories north of Sicily (*i.e.*, Italy). Its belly consisted of Pannonia and Dacia, correctly identified with Wallachia, Podolia, and Transylvania, and the mouth of the gullet occupied the Thracian Chersonese. The tail was formed by Spain, the hips by Germania and Gaul, while Poland and Lithuania formed the gullet.²⁹ Such a way of thinking about the cartographic image of Europe, in which the layout of its coastline built associations with familiar shapes, found its continuation and development in the early modern period in the form of such representations as Johannes Putsch's allegorical map of the Habsburg "Europe the Queen" (*Europa Regina*) from the 1530s.³⁰

Since it was known that Europe bordered Asia and Africa, there remained the question of establishing its boundaries. In this respect, too, the Middle Ages inherited a ready-made set of solutions from Greco-Roman antiquity. As Isidore of Seville put it: "Europa autem [...] incipit a flumine Tanai, descendens ad occasum per septentrionalem Oceanum usque in fines Hispaniae; cuius pars orientalis et meridiana a Ponto consurgens, tota mari Magno coniungitur, et in insulas Gades finitur" (Europe [...] begins from the river Tanais, descending to the west through the northern ocean as far as the borders of Spain; the eastern and southern part of which, rising from

27 BJ 2729, f. 61r; BJ 2457, f. 89r-91v and BJ 2703, f. 101r-v; cf. A. Krawiec, *Ciekawość świata w średniowiecznej Polsce. Studium z geografii kreacyjnej*, Poznań 2010, p. 453. According to Franciszek Bujak and Patrick Gautier-Dalché the author of the description was John of Głogów, but this is only a conjecture.

28 Sami's location on or near the island of Thule (the text is not clear here) is probably due to the author's use of the description of the aforementioned map. The legend *tile* was placed on the Scandinavian Peninsula, while north of it the cartographer plotted an additional peninsula with the legend *pilapelant*, which is a distorted form of the German *Wilde Lappen Land* meaning "land of the wild Sami", cf. F. Bujak, *Studja geograficzno-historyczne*, Kraków 1925, p. 48.

29 P. Gautier-Dalché, *La Géographie...*, p. 314, footnote 103, with amendment by Adam Krawiec (*Pannonia* instead of *Germania*).

30 J.-G. Arentzen, *Imago mundi cartographica. Studien zur Bildlichkeit mittelalterlicher Welt- und Ökumenekarten unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Zusammenwirkens von Text und Bild*, München 1984, pp. 131-136.

the Pontus, joins the whole of the Great Sea, and terminates in the islands of the Gades).³¹ His words became a standard description, repeated by various authors throughout the Middle Ages, although the name Gades most often referred not to the islands, but to the Pillars of Hercules (called *Gades Herculis*), i.e., the Strait of Gibraltar, which marked the western end of the ecumene, and thus of Europe.³² There were also cases of distinguishing between the "islands" of Gades and the Pillars of Hercules, as was done, for example, by Gervase of Tilbury.³³ The role of the unsigned but clearly drawn Pillars of Hercules as the boundary of Europe emphasized, for example, the author of the so-called Sawley map dating to the late 12th century, who placed the legend *Terminus Europe et Affrice* near them.³⁴ Another popular "endpoint" of Europe in the medieval imagination was the appropriately named Cape Finisterre or Fisterra ("end of the earth") in Portugal, located near the famous sanctuary of Santiago de Compostella. Peter of Ailly mentioned that, according to "some" (*quidam*), the end of Europe is a place in Portugal, described as "the head of St. Vincent" (*cap[ut] sancti Vincentii*) - presumably, the Cabo da Roca promontory.³⁵

Some authors further clarified the general name of the Ocean surrounding Europe by allocating its specific parts by their own names - for example, according to Johannes Długosz, these were the Northern Ocean (*Oceanus Sptentrionalis*), the Sarmatian Sea (*Sarmaticum Mare*) and the Gaditine Ocean (*Gaditin[us] Ocean[us]*).³⁶ The last of those names was derived from the above mentioned Gades Herculis. Others called the part of the Ocean lying north of Europe the British, Irish, or Germanic Ocean (*Oceanus Britannicus*, *Oceanus Hibernicus*, *Oceanus Germanicus*). The southern border was sometimes made more precise by pointing to the furthest European island - Sicily, as Otto of Freisingen did.³⁷ In the east, where Europe transitioned smoothly into Asia, and the indication of a specific boundary line was purely a matter of convention, it was drawn on the Tanais River, usually identified with the Don, along with the Maeotian Swamp (*Paludes Maeotides*, the Sea

31 *Isidori...*, 14, 4, 2.

32 A. Scafi, *Les colonnes d'Hercule dans la cartographie médiévale: limites de la Méditerranée et portes du paradis*, in: *Le rivage des mythes: une géocritique méditerranéenne: le lieu et son mythe*, ed. B. Westphal, Limoges 2001, pp. 339-365.

33 *Europe in Hyspania occidentalis oceanus terminus est, maxime ubi apud Gades insulas Herculis Columpne uisuntur*, Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia...*, II, 2, p. 178; cf. *ibidem*, II, 7, p. 236.

34 A. Hiatt, *The Sawley Map* (c. 1190), in: *A Critical Companion...*, p. 126 and Pl. III.

35 Pierre D'Ailly, *Ymago mundi*, ed. E. Buron, Paris 1930, XXVI, p. 314.

36 *Ioannis Dlugossii Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, lib. 1-2, ed. W. Semkowicz-Zaremba, Warszawa 1964, p. 67.

37 *Sicilia Europam terminans, Ottonis et Rahewini Gesta Friderici I Imperatoris*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS rer. Germ. 46, Hannover-Leipzig 1912, II, 13, p. 115.

of Azow), and/or the Euxine Sea (*Pontus Euxinus*, the Black Sea) in the south and a short section in the Riphean Mountains in the north. On some simplified T-O maps Tanais reached all the way to the northern tip of Europe, making it look like an island, completely separated by water from Asia.

Interestingly, one of the most detailed medieval descriptions of Europe's boundaries was provided in a work not devoted to geography, but in a commentary on Dante's *Divine Comedy* by Giovanni Boccaccio. The author of the *Decameron* began his description with the Aegean Sea. He then described successive sections of the eastern border: the Dardanelles, the Propontis *i.e.*, the Sea of Marmara, the "strait of Constantinople", *i.e.*, the Bosphorus, the Black Sea, and the Tanais River all the way to the Northern Ocean. This ocean, according to him, marks the northern and western borders of the continent: along the coasts of Norway and England it reaches the western parts of Spain and the Mediterranean Sea, where the southern section of the border begins. This southern border ran between the coasts of Africa and Europe as far as Crete, at which point it curved northward into the Aegean Sea. Thus, according to him, this island is located at the junction of the borders of all three parts of the world.³⁸ The image of Crete as a place where three continents come together was more widespread. At the end of the 15th century, for example, it was mentioned by Felix Fabri in his description of his pilgrimage to the Holy Land.³⁹

The above information became part of school knowledge, repeated endlessly and accepted so widely and unreservedly that in the mid 15th century the Venetian mapmaker Fra Mauro called the question of the course of borders between parts of the world "boring" (*tediosa*) and "not very important" (*non molto [...] necessaria*).⁴⁰ This was probably indeed the case, as seems to be evidenced by the fact that the authors of medieval European accounts of travel to Asia didn't describe the crossing of the Don, Volga, or any other river as the moment of passage from Europe to Asia, or at best only mentioned it in passing, without attaching much importance to this situation.⁴¹ There were, however, medieval authors who wrote about the return of a traveller *in partes Europae*, such as from the Holy Land.⁴² Only a few

38 B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter*, "Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters" 48 (1992), pp. 145-146, footnote 39.

39 S. Schröder, *Grenzerfahrungen. Mittelalterliche Reisende an den Rändern Europas*, in: *Europa im Weltbild...*, p. 227.

40 *Fra Mauro's World Map, with a Commentary and Translations of the Inscriptions*, ed. P. Falchetta, Turnhout 2006, *2489, pp. 637-638.

41 K. Oschema, *Der Europa-Begriff...*, p. 217.

42 This is how, for example, in the 14th century Johann of Winthertur wrote about the Count of Holland William IV, *Chronica Johannis Witodurani*, ed. F. Baethgen, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum nova series 3, Berlin 1924, p. 221.

instances of openly challenging the established standard can be enumerated in the medieval writing. One such was Gossouin of Metz, the author of *L'image du monde*, a popular science treatise written in French in 1245. He pointed to the Alps as the southern border of Europe, and therefore counted Italy, Gascony, Spain, and Greece as Africa.⁴³ However, this was a view so eccentric and contrary to established tradition that, despite the popularity of Gossouin's work, it was not repeated by any other author.

Curiosity, however, spurred at least some scholars to consider the eastern border of Europe. On one of the extensive legends on his map, Fra Mauro stated that the Tanais or Don was unsuitable for the border of Europe for three reasons: it cuts off too much of it, it has too zigzag a shape and, finally, its source is in a different place than claimed - according to him, it does not flow from the Riphean Mountains, but from a forest in Russia.⁴⁴ The first of these arguments is actually contradictory, because the cartographer nowhere explained what, in this case, besides the arbitrarily determined and confirmed by the authority of the Ancients, determines belonging to Europe. Certainly, it was not cultural or religious issues, because in some places on the map he remarked that the area between the Don and the Volga was inhabited by different peoples with different languages and customs, professing different religions. The name of the latter river is of importance here, because it was precisely this river that the Venetian, Camaldolese, proposed as the most suitable candidate for the role of the border of the continents because of its straighter course and source in the Riphean Mountains.⁴⁵

Fra Mauro's map is rightly considered the most outstanding achievement of medieval cartography - its "excellent closing".⁴⁶ This also applies to the image of Europe, which on no other medieval map was as detailed, precise, and essentially correct (in our meaning of the word).⁴⁷ It is noteworthy that although, necessarily, Europe appeared on every world map, the mapmaker did not always include its name, sometimes limiting himself to the names of lands and other geographical objects. A special case in this respect is the location of the names of Europe and Asia on the Hereford world map of the late 13th century. The legends *EUROPA* and *AFFRICA*, emblazoned in large gold capitals, have been swapped places on it. This has been usually considered a simple mistake in the scholarship. Recently, however, Marcia Kupfer offered the interpretation

⁴³ *L'image du monde de maître Gossouin. Rédaction en prose*, ed. O.H. Prior, Lausanne-Paris 1913, II, 4, pp. 129-130.

⁴⁴ *Fra Mauro's...*, *2506, p. 641.

⁴⁵ *Fra Mauro's...*, *2848, p. 703. It is worth noting that, contrary to the cartographer's words, the course of the Volga on his map is not much straighter than that of the Tanais.

⁴⁶ W. Iwańczak, *Na progu czasów nowożytnych – kartograficzny obraz świata w twórczości Fra Mauro*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 91 (1992) 1, p. 32.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 25 ff.

according to which we have to do with a deliberate decision of the mapmaker, who used the inversion of viewer's perspective - an iconographic move known from medieval art, in order to indicate that the world seen from God's perspective can be radically different from what a human can see with her or his sinful eyes.⁴⁸ Accidentally or not, such a concept made Europe more valuable, since it placed this part of the world at the right hand of God, and therefore from the "good" side from the point of view of medieval symbology.

Looking for peculiarities of the image of Europe in medieval written and cartographic sources, one would have to note several main points. The first one is regional differentiation. The European image of Asia and Africa was strongly standardized and to a very limited extent reflected the differences in perspective of authors writing in different regions. About their own part of the world, individual European authors wrote from the perspective of their place of abode and/or origin. Persons from different countries or regions had "their" own Europe, in which territories closer to them were generally more familiar and therefore were described in more detail than those further away. For an author living in England or Spain, the Slavic lands were almost as foreign and exotic as Africa or central Asia, and certainly less known and familiar than the Holy Land.

This difference in perspective is well demonstrated by comparing the way in which Central and Eastern Europe are depicted on two 13th-century large *mappaemundi*: the Ebstorf and Hereford maps. The first one was probably made at the Ebstorf monastery in central Germany, while the second in southwest England. Ebstorf lay relatively close to the Hanseatic cities that conducted trade with Central and Eastern European countries. As a result, their picture is relatively accurate. The mapmaker put on the map the names of most of the more important lands in the area at the time, and marked the main Ruthenian cities and the capitals of Poland and Bohemia, as well as the main rivers, including the Oder and Vistula. As far as is known (the section depicting Poland is damaged), no information appeared on the map that could be described from today's perspective as definitely erroneous, and the distortion of place names is relatively minor.⁴⁹ The Hereford map was created in a more remote area, in circles with little interest in the area in question. Consequently, its representation is less accurate, based more on post-antique terminology and the author's imaginations.⁵⁰

There were also exceptions to this general rule. Sometimes a perception of radical otherness of not-so-distant parts of Europe had even prompted

48 M. Kupfer, *The Hereford Map* (c. 1300), in: *A Critical Companion...*, pp. 230-231 and 248-252.

49 J. Strzelczyk, *Proces aktualizacji obrazu Polski i Europy Wschodniej w świadomości XIII-wiecznych kręgów uczonych*, in: idem, *Średniowieczny obraz świata*, Poznań 2004, pp. 196-197.

50 Ibidem, p. 196.

certain authors to name them as “other world” (*alter orbis* or *alter mundus*). In the second half of the 11th century for Adam of Bremen such “other world” was Scandinavia,⁵¹ and in the middle of the next century for the bishop Matthew of Krakow - Ruthenia.⁵² It seems, nonetheless, that in general there was a better knowledge of Western Europe by the inhabitants of the eastern part of the continent than vice versa. People living in the western part of the continent tended to extend to its eastern and northern part general ideas about the extra-European world, and see it as a strange, exotic land.⁵³ For instance, at the end of the 13th century, Richard of Haldingham placed a scorpion and an ape in Eastern Europe on the Hereford world map, and some decades later an otherwise well-informed author who created in Avignon a description of Eastern Europe, identified unicorns and tigers as typical animals of Poland and Bulgaria.⁵⁴ A noticeable tendency to the “orientalization” of Eastern Europe in the later Middle Ages, which sometimes even took such forms as describing Lithuanians as Saracens, had at least in part to do with the popularity of the Baltic territories as a target for crusades by Western European knighthood.⁵⁵ Independently of this process, a kind of “self-orientalization,” i.e., defining their country by representatives of the Polish political nation as part of the East, can be observed since the 13th century, which was manifested, for example, in Vincent of Kielcza’s words about Poland being *in partibus orientis posita*.⁵⁶ Its culmination was the equivocation of Poland with Sarmatia, initiated in the mid 15th century, and the self-identification of the Polish noble political nation as Sarmatians. The developments described were, however, never associated with the denial of Poland’s belonging to Europe and to Western *Christianitas*.

In the written geographical descriptions as well as on the maps, there was a tendency to expose those elements that were the legacy of antiquity, so, for example, a detailed description of Greece - obviously more the ancient

51 *Magistri Adam Bremensis Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, ed. B. Schmeidler, MGH SS rer. Germ. 2, Hannover-Leipzig 1917, IV, 21, p. 250.

52 B. Kürbis, *Cystersi w kulturze polskiego średniowiecza. Trzy świadectwa z XII wieku*, in: eadem, *Na progach historii II: O świadectwach do dziejów kultury Polski średniowiecznej*, Poznań 2001, p. 225. On the contexts of the term *alter orbis* in medieval sources see P. Kochanek, *Die Vorstellung vom Norden und der Eurozentrismus. Eine Auswertung der patristischen und mittelalterlichen Literatur*, Mainz 2004, pp. 365 ff. and 382.

53 K. Oschema, *Der Europa-Begriff...*, p. 200.

54 *Anonymi Descriptio Europae orientalis*, ed. D. Kunčer, *Sources for Serbian History* 13, Beograd 2013, p. 131 and 146.

55 A.V. Murray, *The Saracens of the Baltic: pagan and Christian Lithuanians in the perception of English and French crusaders to late medieval Prussia*, “*Journal of Baltic Studies*” 41 (2010), 4, pp. 416 ff.

56 *Sancti Stanislai vita maior*, ed. W. Kętrzyński, in: *Monumenta Poloniae Historica* 4, Lwów 1884, I, 1, p. 364.

one than the modern one, and Italy headed by Rome - "the head (or the capital city) of the world" (*caput mundi*).⁵⁷ In fact, Rome appeared on the known medieval world maps more often than Jerusalem, not to mention other European cities.⁵⁸ The role that Rome had in the imagined world of the Latin Middle Ages among cities, was among European rivers undoubtedly played by the Danube. The conviction of its unique role as the most famous river of the continent⁵⁹ also had its roots in antiquity, when the Danube was the border between the "civilized" Mediterranean and the *barbaricum*. This is also how it was portrayed in Orosius' description of the *ecumene*.⁶⁰ Later, a similar idea was formulated by authors of numerous geographical and other texts throughout the Middle Ages. The Danube also had a strong visual presence in cartography.⁶¹ On some late medieval nautical charts, the river was the most visually prominent inland object.

For obvious reasons, there were fewer references in the depiction of Europe to places associated with biblical history. However, there have been regular attempts to supplement this gap with storylines linking Western and Central European locations with characters known from the Bible, usually the apostles. Imaginative Europe also contained relatively few widely known storylines related to the heroes of popular stories. "Europe was of course less a land of romance than Asia".⁶² They usually functioned at the regional level, as they were associated with figures important to the communities living in particular countries or regions - rulers, knights, saints, or outlaws. There existed only a few exceptions to the rule, *i.e.*, stories that gained wider popularity and influenced the perception of space on a pan-European scale. Most of them were on topics related either to famous saints or to King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

Compared to Asia, there was also relatively few marvels in the depictions of Europe. Surely, many unusual local places in the type of miraculous springs were known, but they very rarely broke through to the wider consciousness and became part of the imaginative geography. The exceptions

57 Cf. a rhyming inscription on the Hereford world map: "Roma capud mundi tenet orbis frena rotundi" (Rome, head of the world, holds the reins of the entire earthly circle), *The Hereford Map. A Transcription and Translation of the Legends with Commentary*, ed. S.D. Westrem, Turnhout 2001, p. 200.

58 A.-D. von den Brincken, *Mappa mundi und Chronographia. Studien zur imago mundi des abendländischen Mittelalters*, "Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters" 24 (1968), pp. 164 and 167.

59 E.g. *Iste [Danubius] est qui in Europa plus omnibus habet famam* (It is this [Danube] that is the most famous of all [rivers] in Europe), Pierre d'Ailly, *Ynago...*, LIX, p. 484.

60 *Orosii Historiarum...*, I, 2, 54, p. 25.

61 A.-D. von den Brincken, *Mappa mundi...*, p. 170.

62 J.K. Wright, *The Geographical Lore of the Time of the Crusades. A Study in the History of Medieval Science and Tradition in Western Europe*, New York 1925, p. 74.

were Ireland, seen as a kind of European equivalent of India - a land full of wonder at the edge of the world,⁶³ as well as places associated with the Arthurian tradition such as the Brocéliande forest, at least since the 15th century identified most commonly with the Paimpont forest in Brittany.⁶⁴ Relatively well known in Europe were the remarkable sites associated with the Arelat, and Naples, which in the early 13th century were described by Gervasius of Tilbury in his *Otia imperialia*.⁶⁵ This most important and popular achievement of medieval paradoxography was also the first work to introduce the peculiarities of central Europe into the imagined world of Western European educated elites, specifically the Polish *onagri* that drive away hunting dogs with water gushing from their nostrils.⁶⁶

The role of the natural marvels in the image of Europe evolved over the course of time. It grew increasingly in the High and Late Middle Ages, and the motif of “the wonders of the West”, opposed to the traditional, mainly post-antique “wonders of the East”, became an important element in building the self-esteem of the inhabitants of Latin Europe as a whole and of individual countries. This phenomenon was also present in Poland, where in the 1470s Jan Długosz proudly wrote in his *Chorography* about two Polish natural marvels, “his que a Solino enumerantur, possunt adiungi” (which could be added to those listed by Solinus): pots that grew supposedly by themselves in the ground, and trees that turned to stone.⁶⁷ The first of these “freaks of nature”, along with the Polish (or generally central European) water-gushing moose, later made a Europe-wide career, joining the ranks of the most popular “wonders of the West”, which were enumerated readily by authors of early modern descriptions of Europe such as those in Sebastian Münster’s *Cosmography*.⁶⁸

Other common elements of the imagined Europe of the Latin (and not only, because also Greek-Orthodox) Middle Ages, were the aforementioned borders and the tendency to describe the continent, and the whole ecumene,

63 L. Daston, K. Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature 1150-1750*, New York 1998, pp. 25-26. It is significant that the wonders of Ireland were the only ones in Europe to be mentioned by some authors of medieval nautical charts, M. Hoogvliet, *The Wonders of Europe: From the Middle Ages to the Sixteenth Century*, in: *Europa im Weltbild...*, p. 246.

64 On the Brocéliande forest and other similar places appearing in medieval literature, cf. C.J. Saunders, *The Forest of Medieval Romance. Avernus, Broceliande, Arden*, Woodbride 1993.

65 L. Daston, K. Park, *Wonders...*, p. 24 ff.; S.E. Banks, J.W. Binns, *Introduction*, in: Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia...*, pp. lviii-lxiii.

66 Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia...*, III, 65, p. 684. In later sources, starting with Bartholomew the Englishman’s encyclopaedia, the animal was most often located in Bohemia and referred to as *Loz* (probably moose), cf. J.B. Friedman, *Tracking the mysterious ‘Loz’ in the ‘Secrets of Natural History’*, “Reinardus” 30 (2020), pp. 104-136.

67 Ioannis Dlugossii *Annales...*, p. 116.

68 M. Hoogvliet, *The Wonders...*, pp. 248-249.

from the east - the Tanais River represented the beginning, not the end, of Europe.⁶⁹ Consequently, located in eastern Europe, Scythia was referred to as the "first" region of the continent.⁷⁰ This was undoubtedly related to the widespread symbolism of the cardinal directions in the Middle Ages, which originated in the ancient Greek tradition, but was adopted and further developed by Christianity. The east was the direction perceived in the most positive way. It was associated exclusively with positive qualities such as warmth, light, goodness, and salvation, in contrast to the west, which was associated with cold, darkness, evil, sin, and Satan.⁷¹

The division of Europe into large geographic regions, bearing post-antique names, was another common feature of the European medieval imaginative geography. Their names, such as *Scythia*, *Germania*, *Gallia*, *Hispania*, *Sarmatia*, and others, were known from the read and appreciated works of Greek and Roman authors. By force, they were also used by the authors of the first Christian descriptions of Europe: Paul Orosius, and Isidore of Seville. As a result, they became fixed in the consciousness of educated persons and remained in permanent use. They were considered an unchanging and timeless element of reality, representing the higher, divine order in the world.⁷² This belief was referred to, for example, by Otto of Freisingen, who in the 13th century ended his description of the ecumene with the words: *Quarum [scil. partibus mundi] provincias, situs, regiones qui velit cognoscere, legat Orosium* (Of which parts of the world, he who wishes to know the provinces, places, and regions, should read Orosius).⁷³ The post-antique regions constituted, as it were, the first level of geographical naming. Superimposed on it was a second level, consisting of the current names of peoples, realms, and lands, which reflected the dynamic current situation in these timeless regions. These two levels were treated as complementary, rather than alternative ways of describing reality. Authors of the Middle Ages saw

69 Cf. the beginning of the description of Europe in the Isidore's *Etymologies*: *Europa [...]* *incipit a flumine Tanai, Isidori...*, 14, 4, 2. The quoted phrase was, like many other passages from the *Etymologies*, repeated by numerous medieval authors, including Bartholomew the Englishman and Vincent of Beauvais. Others put it in their own words, but kept the same sense, such as Honorius Augustodunensis, who wrote: *in qua [scil. Europa] in primis versus septentrionem sunt Rifei montes et Tanais fluvius [...], et Meotides paludes* (In which [i.e. Europe] first, to the north, are the Riphean Mountains and the Tanais River, [...], and the Maeotian Marshes), Honorius Augustodunensis, *Imago...*, I, 21, p. 59. The phrase *versus septentrionem* is somewhat misleading, since in this context it does not mean starting from the north of the entire description of Europe, but only its eastern limit.

70 *Prima Europae regio Scythia inferior, Isidori...*, 14, 4, 3.

71 J. Fischer, *Oriens – Occidens – Europa. Begriff und Gedanke 'Europa' in der späten Antike und im frühen Mittelalter*, Wiesbaden 1957, pp. 61 ff.; D. Terkla, N. Millea, *Preface...*, pp. xviii-xix.

72 Cf. N. Lozovsky, 'The Earth is Our Book'. *Geographical Knowledge in the Latin West*, Ann Arbor 2000, pp. 141-145.

73 *Ottonis...*, p. 38.

no internal contradiction in describing the same territory, using post-antique and contemporary names simultaneously or interchangeably. The imagined Europe could be both Germania or Scythia, and Slavland, Poland, Hungary, Russia, and so on. The author of St. Adalbert's *vita* described his birthplace with the words "Est locus in partibus Germaniae" (there is a place in Germania)⁷⁴ not because of the political ties of the Přemyslids with the Reich, but because of the location of Bohemia on the territory of Germania understood as a region of the "first level".

The two-level geographical naming of Europe remained popular throughout the Middle Ages because it allowed the impression of completeness of the picture of geographical space, despite lack of knowledge of the actual situation in the particular area. The use of ancient terminology, considered timeless, made it possible to describe lesser-known areas in a credible way by referring to recognized authorities. Furthermore, such a description had not been invalidated by ethnic and political changes, and thus could be used (e.g., in school teaching) and copied over the centuries. Prestige also mattered. By describing their countries and (political) nations with ancient names, members of the educated elites indicated their place in the esteemed world of the Old Greeks and Romans. In the High and Late Middle Ages, there was a strong tendency to blur the line between both levels of geographical naming wherever possible. France had been identified with Gaul, the Holy Roman Empire with Germania, and Poland (later Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) with Sarmatia. The last of these identifications was made possible by a major transformation in the European terminology of "first-level" geography in the 15th century, following the reception of Ptolemy's *Geography*. Previously, the standard term for the area of Eastern Europe was *Scythia*, while Ptolemy called the same territory *Sarmatia Europaea*. His authority caused the name he used to supersede the earlier one in common use, with all its identity, cultural, and political implications.⁷⁵

There was also another widely used method in the Middle Ages (and early modern period) of securing a place for European *nationes* in the great universal history, referring in turn to the Christian tradition. It consisted of joining the biblical tradition with the help of genealogies, deriving the common ancestor of an ethnopolitical group from one of the sons of Noah.⁷⁶ Of course,

⁷⁴ *Sancti Adalberti, Pragensis episcopi et martyris vita prior*, ed. J. Karwasińska, Monumenta Poloniae Historica s.n. 4/1, Warszawa 1962, p. 3.

⁷⁵ T. Ulewicz, *Sarmacja. Studium z problematyki słowiańskiej XV i XVI w.*, Kraków 2006², p. 34.

⁷⁶ On the development and evolution of the notion of the origin of all peoples from the three sons of Noah in the Middle Ages cf. A. Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel. Geschichte der Meinungen über Ursprung und Vielfalt der Sprachen und Völker*, vol. 2-3, Stuttgart 1958-1960; B. Braude, *The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, "The William and Mary Quarterly, 3rd Series" 54 (1997), 1, pp. 103-142.

the name of Europe does not appear in the Bible, but the analogy between the three parts of the known world and the three ancestors of all mankind [was] too good not to be used. The idea that all inhabitants of a certain area are descended from one of the three Noachids first appeared in the writings of Joseph Flavius, but initially received little attention from Christian authors. Neither Orosius nor even Augustine of Hippo wrote on the subject. It was, however, taken up by Jerome of Stridon and later by Isidore of Seville. Isidore presented the Noachid genealogy of peoples in a version similar to Josephus Flavius, in which the descendants of Japheth and Cham were not exclusively assigned to one of the three parts of the world.⁷⁷

In Carolingian times, a simplified version also appeared, according to which all the inhabitants of Asia were to be descended from the oldest, Shem, the inhabitants of Europe from Japheth, and Africa from the youngest and worst, Cham. It is first attested in a didactic dialogue *Interrogationes et responsiones in Genesin* by Alcuin from the late 8th century.⁷⁸ Later, these two versions functioned in parallel, sometimes presented in the same text as two alternatives.⁷⁹ In addition, there was a third version, popularized by Honorius Augustodunensis, who attributed descent from the three Noachids to representatives of the three main groups of (ideal) society of the time: *oratores* were said to be descended from Shem, *bellatores* from Japheth, and *laboratores* from Cham.⁸⁰ Interestingly, some have even managed to reconcile the two contradictory theories together. The anonymous author of the late 14th-century *Österreichische Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften* wrote about the Japheth's descendants: "von Jafet wurden fünfzehn geslächte geboren ze Europa, davon sind edel lewt und die ritterleichen geboren".⁸¹ The Semites and Chamites have also been described by him in a similar way.

In the days of early modern colonialism, similar concepts were used to prove that, by virtue of their origin, Europeans were natural-born warriors, naturally predestined to conquer other peoples, especially Chamite Africans, by nature destined for serfdom. Earlier however, in the early 13th century, Eike of Repgow had strongly argued that since each of Noah's three sons was given a different part of the world, none of them should be subordinated to the others.⁸² During this period, however, there were also occasional instances of modifying the Noachid concept to fit current needs and prejudices.

⁷⁷ Isidori..., 9, 2, 2-135.

⁷⁸ Alcuinus, *Interrogationes et responsiones in Genesin*, Interrogatio 141, ed. J.-P. Migne, in: *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina C*, Paris 1863, col. 532C.

⁷⁹ E.g. Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia...*, II, 1, p. 166.

⁸⁰ J. Fischer, *Oriens...*, p. 18.

⁸¹ *Österreichische Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften*, ed. J. Seemüller, MGH Deutsche Chroniken 6, Hannover-Leipzig 1909, p. 8.

⁸² J. Fischer, *Oriens...*, p. 18.

A late 13th century anonymous author of the so-called *Bavarian Chronicle of Emperors and Popes*, for example, attributed Chamic origins to the Slavs.⁸³

The concept of the origin of all Europeans from Japheth enjoyed great popularity. It was repeated in texts of various genres, and was also an important element of cartographic convention, especially on the so-called T-O and V-in-square diagrams, on which representations of various parts of the world were repeatedly stamped with the names of the Noachids associated with them. As I previously mentioned, it became a tool for the construction of collective identities, although not so much on a pan-European level, but more on a national one, with the help of the creation of elaborate genealogies indicating the places of individual nations in the great family of Adam's descendants.⁸⁴

It does not seem to be a coincidence that the idea of the common ancestor of all Europeans appeared in the sources precisely at the time of Charlemagne. It seems that the reference to the concept of Europe may have been an attempt to find a term around which it would be possible to integrate the whole "earthly *civitas Dei*"⁸⁵ under his rule, consisting of a mosaic of different peoples and lands that otherwise had little in common, except that they were just situated in Europe. Hence the famous words from a poem attributed to Angilbert, who called Charlemagne *Europae venerandus apex* (Europe's venerable top), *Europae veneranda pharus* (Europe's venerable lighthouse), and *pater Europae* (father of Europe).⁸⁶ At the same time, exposing the "Europeanness" of the Frankish king/emperor allowed him to more clearly contrast his Roman Empire with the second, Byzantine Roman Empire, which at that time still controlled a large area lying within Asia. By alluding to the tendency, noticeable in earlier sources, to use the name Europe in a religious context, referring to (Western) Christianity, it may have also indicated the sacral aspect of Charlemagne's power as a Christian ruler.⁸⁷ It also provided, perhaps above all, a persuasive means of portraying him as a powerful ruler by showing (somewhat exaggeratedly) the vastness of his realm.

However, this attempt to construct a European-Carolingian identity probably appealed to a concept too abstract for the average, even educated, representative of the elites of the time, and therefore failed. Symptomatically, the name

83 *Chronicon imperatorum et pontificum bavaricum*, ed. G. Waitz, in: MGH Scriptores 24, Hannover 1879, p. 221; cf. A. Pleszczyński, *Przekazy niemieckie o Polsce i jej mieszkańcach w okresie panowania Piastów*, Lublin 2016, pp. 61 and 64.

84 Cf. e.g. D. Hay, *Europe: The Emergence of an Idea*, New York 1966², pp. 42-48.

85 J. Fischer, *Oriens...*, p. 77.

86 *Angilberti (Homeri) carmina*, in: *Poetae latini aevi Carolini*, MGH Poetae 1/1, ed. E. Dümmler, Berlin 1881, p. 368, 370 and 379. It's noteworthy, however, that these words are just few items in an extensive list of laudatory titles Angilbert bestowed on Charlemagne.

87 J. Fischer, *Oriens...*, p. 79.

of Europe did not appear in the documents of Charlemagne himself, the official annals of the Frankish kingdom (beyond its purely geographical significance), or in the emperor's biography by Einhard. However, it did not fall into total oblivion. In the educated circles in the Carolingian kingdoms and in the Reich during the reign of the Ottonian and Salic dynasties the word "Europe" had become "a topos of panegyric", or a "cultural emblem",⁸⁸ used most often to show someone's might.⁸⁹ All the time there was a tendency to implicitly identify this Europe with the territory under the authority of the Western Emperor.⁹⁰ It seems this is also what the author of the *Quedlinburg Annals* had in mind, writing the aforementioned words about "mother Europe". Particularly noteworthy from the Polish point of view in this context is the information of the same annals that the Imperial Diet in Quedlinburg in 991 was attended by "dux Sclavonicus Misica cum caeteris Europae primis" (Slavic prince Mieszko with the entire rest of the leaders of Europe),⁹¹ which can be regarded as the first confirmation of the nascent Polish state belonging to "political" Europe. Lambert of St. Omer's map of Europe, illustrating his description of Charlemagne's reign, referred to the same tradition.⁹²

However, it has always been a minority, not to say niche, trend that disappeared almost completely in the High Middle Ages, although the tradition of referring to Europe like a thin red line ran throughout the whole history of the Latin Middle Ages, barely visible, but still present. The two rival universal powers in Europe at the time - the empire and the papacy - appealed to ideas that were more attractive to the "public opinion" at the time than Europeaness. The rulers from the Stauf dynasty and their supporters emphasized "Romanness". The emperor's *dominium mundi* was supposed to come from the fact that he was a Roman emperor, not a European one. The papal party, on the other hand, in the time of the great reform of the Church built a sense of community around the idea of *Christianitas*: a universal community of Christians recognizing the supremacy of the Pope.⁹³

88 K.J. Leyser, *Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages*, "Past and Present" 137 (1992), p. 37.

89 J. Fischer, *Oriens...*, pp. 82 ff.

90 Examples of this trend include e.g. the words of Widukind of Corvey that after defeating the Hungarians *tota iam fere Europa liberata sit* (Almost all of Europe was liberated), *Widukindi monachi Corbeiensis Rerum gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres*, ed. P. Hirsch, MGH SS rer. Germ. 60, Hannover 1935, I, 19, p. 29; or the declaration of the *Quedlinburg Annals*' author that Otto III was crowned *non solum Romano, sed et pene totius Europae populo acclamante* (was crowned with the consent of not only the people of Rome, but almost all of Europe), *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, p. 491.

91 Ibidem, p. 478.

92 Cf. H. Kugler, *Europa...*, pp. 47-48.

93 Cf. R. Hiestand, "Europa" im Mittelalter – vom geographischen Begriff zur politischen Idee, in: *Europa – Begriff und Idee. Historische Streiflichter*, ed. H. Hecker, Bonn 1991, pp. 39-40.

Both of these ideas were attractive because they appealed to emotions understandable to the majority of Europeans at the time and to a reality that could be eyewitnessed. Imperial *Romanitas* invoked a fascination with the greatness of ancient Rome, known from literature, confirmed by the sight of buildings surviving from that era, and reinforced by the growing popularity of Roman law. *Christianitas*' sense of unity was based on a common religion, adhered to by the vast majority of Western and Central Europeans. This commonality could be confirmed by the growing number of people traveling in Europe over time, who could notice similar churches in different countries, where clergymen dressed in similar clothes held the same services in a common language. The European idea would not have been able to appeal to similar emotions, and the travellers' observations were more indicative of the diversity of language and customs of the people of each European country, rather than their common features. A significant testimony to the fact that Europeanness did not play a significant role in the value system and identity of the educated persons of Europe themselves is the fact that it was not until the 14th century that an adjective that can be translated as "European" appeared in Latin (*europicus/europaeus*), and slowly began to spread in the following century.⁹⁴

Undoubtedly, the Europe of the High Middle Ages was the most Christianized part of the world, and at least some of its inhabitants recognized this, such as the chronicler Godfrey of Viterbo, who in the 1180s, describing the division of the ecumene among Noah's sons, wrote: "Japhet [...] venit in Europam, ubi nunc sunt christiani" (Japheth [...] came to Europe, where Christians are now).⁹⁵ However, there has never been a full identification of *Christianitas* with Europeanness.⁹⁶ This is understandable, mainly because it would have meant questioning the universalism of Christianity.⁹⁷ Besides, it was realized that never would the whole of Europe in the geographical sense of the word have been exclusively

⁹⁴ R. Hiestand, "Europa" im Mittelalter..., p. 46; B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa...*, p. 145, D. Hay, *Europe...*, pp. 86-87.

⁹⁵ *Gotifredi Viterbiensis Speculum regum*, ed. G. Waitz, in: MGH Scriptores 22, Hannover 1872, p. 32.

⁹⁶ One can point to only a few instances in which the authors of the sources seem to have equated the concepts of Europe and *Christianitas*, e.g. two English T-O maps from the early 12th century (BL Harley MS 3667, f. 8v; Oxford St. John's College 17, f. 6r.), on which the legend *EUROPA* crosses the Mediterranean Sea and also overlaps the territory of the extended Holy Land, shortly before being conquered by participants in the First Crusade, A.-D. von den Brincken, *Europa in der Kartographie des Mittelalters*, "Archiv für Kulturgeschichte" 55 (1973), pp. 299-300.

⁹⁷ However, it should be noted that some authors were able to find a solution to this dilemma. Alexander von Roes, for example, in 1288 stated that, while the Roman Church is common to all humankind, the *res publica ecclesie Romane residet in Europa*, Alexander von Roes, *Noticia seculi*, in: *idem, Schriften*, ed. H. Grundmann, H. Heimpel, MGH Staatsschriften des späteren Mittelalters 1/1, Stuttgart 1958, p. 159; cf. *ibidem*, p. 162.

Christian, and at the same time many Christians live outside its borders, even if they were mostly condemned as schismatics.⁹⁸

However, in various genres of medieval writing, a recurring motif of Europe as the bulwark of Christianity, surrounded by pagans, was appearing. The first traces of this way of thinking can be seen as early as the early Middle Ages, in the famous words of the author of the so-called *Mozarabic Chronicle* about Europeans (*Europenses*) fighting at Poitiers against the Arabs.⁹⁹ From the later centuries one can - by way of example - cite texts as distant in time, space, and genre as the chronicle of William of Malmesbury (1st half of the 12th century), specifically his version of Urban II of Clermont's speech,¹⁰⁰ an anonymous French treatise on crusading *Directorium ad passagium faxciendum transmarinum* (1330s),¹⁰¹ speeches by representatives of King Charles V of France, convincing Pope Urban V why he should not return to Rome (mid 1360s),¹⁰² or the moralistic treatise *De malo huius saeculi per omnes aetates* by the Cistercian Jacob of Paradiz (1st half of the 15th century).¹⁰³ At the same time, there are examples of recognizing that even Christian Europe is not confessionally homogeneous. The author of the anonymous *Descripciones terrarum* from the mid 13th century stated this fact in a neutral tone, writing that Europe is divided into two parts: Western and Eastern Church.¹⁰⁴ Others lamented that not even all of Europe is a hotbed of "true" Christianity, as it is home to many schismatics in the east and "Saracens" in the south.¹⁰⁵

In the 13th and 14th centuries, more and more manifestations of the emerging European sense of superiority are discernible. Among the early examples of this trend is Bartholomew the Englishman's description of Europe, in which he

98 On knowledge and perceptions about particular groups of Christians living outside Europe in the High Middle Ages, cf. A.-D. von den Brincken, *Die 'Nationes Christianorum Orientalium' im Verständnis der Lateinischen Historiographie: von der Mitte des 12. bis in die zweite Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts*, Köln-Wien 1973, passim.

99 J. Fischer, *Oriens...*, p. 51. Remarkably, this is the only case when an author used the term "Europeans" in the medieval writing before the 14th century.

100 *Wilelmi Malmesbiriensis monachi De gestis regum Anglorum libri quinque*. ed. W. Stubbs, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores* 90/2, London 1889, IV, 347, p. 395.

101 B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa...*, p. 143.

102 D. Hay, *Europe...*, pp. 74-75. The king's envoys argued, among other things, that only Europe remained Christian, so the pope should reside in the middle of Europe, and that Avignon was closer to its geographical centre (which was to be in Marseilles) than Rome, *ibidem*, p. 75, footnote 1.

103 Jakub z Paradyża, *De malis huius saeculi per omnes aetates*, in: *idem, Wybór tekstów dotyczących reformy Kościoła*, ed. S. Porębski, *Textus et studia historiam theologiae in Polonia excoltae spectantia* 6, Warszawa 1978, 15, pp. 189-192.

104 M.L. Colker, *America Rediscovered in the Thirteenth Century?*, "Speculum" 54 (1979), p. 720.

105 B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa...*, p. 143.

stressed that although Europe is smaller than Asia, it matches the latter in terms of population, and surpasses it in terms of the advantages of its inhabitants, who are “corpore maiores, vi[rtu]tib[us] fortiores, animo audaciores, forma & specie pulciores, quam faciunt Asiae vel Affricae regiones” (larger in body, stronger in virtues, bolder in mind, more beautiful in form and appearance than those from the regions of Asia or Africa).¹⁰⁶ The theoretical basis for such concepts was provided by the reception of the writings of Hippocrates and Aristotle, who in their works pointed out the differences between the inhabitants of Europe and Asia, explaining them with the help of the theory of the direct relationship between the characteristics of human groups and conditions in their living places.¹⁰⁷ Particularly important for building a European sense of self-esteem was the fact that Aristotle drew political and cultural conclusions from the above theory. According to him, Europeans are inherently free and courageous, while Asians naturally tend to live in servitude and slavery.¹⁰⁸ Arguments for the supremacy of Europeans were also sought in astrology, which, despite some reservations, was considered a serious science in the Late Middle Ages. According to Parisian scholar Nicolas Oresme (14th century), it is the arrangement of celestial bodies that makes Europe more noble in relation to the rest of the world, and its inhabitants inherently superior under others.¹⁰⁹ The later medieval sense of European superiority was not restricted to the human aspect. Its expression was also the popularity of the above-mentioned motif of juxtaposing the “wonders of the East” and the “wonders of the West”.¹¹⁰

The belief in the natural dominance of Europeans over the inhabitants of other parts of the world was also shared by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini.¹¹¹ It is the later Pope Pius II who is considered the man that in the mid 15th century finally gave the concept of Europe a new political and cultural meaning.¹¹² He made the theme of Europe one of the main motifs in his speeches and written texts.¹¹³ He was also the author of *De Europa* (1458) – the first distinct work devoted exclusively to this continent,¹¹⁴ which, by the way, he

¹⁰⁶ Bartholomaei Anglici *De rerum proprietatibus*, Frankfurt am Main 1601 (reprint: Frankfurt am Main 1964), XV, 50, p. 648.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. J. Pigeaud, *L'Europe et le mythe de la tempérance*, in: *Le Néo. Sources, héritages et réécritures dans les cultures européennes*, ed. K. Martin-Cardini, J. Aubé-Bourligueux, Rennes 2016, pp. 125-135.

¹⁰⁸ B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa...*, p. 140.

¹⁰⁹ R. Hiestand, “Europa” im Mittelalter..., p. 47.

¹¹⁰ Cf. L. Daston, K. Park, *Wonders...*, pp. 34-35.

¹¹¹ B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa...*, p. 150.

¹¹² Ibidem, p. 146.

¹¹³ K. Oschema, *Der Europa-Begriff...*, pp. 223-225.

¹¹⁴ Basically, *De Europa* was part of a cosmographical diptych that also included a description of Asia, but functioned as a separate work.

got to know personally to a large extent during his numerous travels. It was a geographic-historical-political description, representing a new model of writing about the world which became the standard in 16th-century writing.¹¹⁵ The extent of Europe as described by Piccolomini was determined by Christianity. It covered the western, central, and southern parts of the continent, including the Balkans and the Byzantine Empire. Its northeastern extent was marked by Livonia. Only the Principality of Moscow was tacitly excluded from this Christian Europe. This was somewhat typical of the period.¹¹⁶ Closer interest in the Muscovy area had to wait several more decades, until the early 16th century. He did not, however, describe Europe as a unity, but rather exposed the linguistic, cultural, and religious differences between individual countries and nations.¹¹⁷ Piccolomini was also fond of referring to the emotionally-loaded notion of Europe in the context of calls for a common struggle against the Ottoman threat. In a speech addressed to the Imperial Diet in Frankfurt in 1454, he described Ottoman expansion in dramatic terms, saying: “nunc vero in Europa, id est in patria, in domo propria, in sede nostra percussi caesique sumus” (but now in Europe, that is, in our own motherland, in our own house, in our seat, we are beaten and killed).¹¹⁸ In this way, “the name of the continent became charged with emotional content”,¹¹⁹ and the later pope initiated developmental processes that gained momentum in the modern period.

This new emotional attitude toward Europe was also reflected in geographical writing and cartography. There was a significant shift in emphasis. Europe became more important to geographers than Asia, and its early modern depictions became much more detailed and extensive than they had been previously. In Honorius Augustodunensis’ *Imago mundi*, compiled in the early 12th century, the discussion of ecumene begins with a description of Asia that takes up about 7.5 pages (in the modern edition of Valerie Flint). The description of Europe takes up about 3.5 pages in this edition, and the description of Africa takes up only one page. To this must be added the descriptions of the European islands included on two pages, which were not included in any of the three parts of the world and were described

115 B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa...*, p. 147.

116 Ibidem, p. 148.

117 A.S. Martins, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini: in Search of Europe*, in: *Legado clássico no Renascimento e sua recepção: contributos para a renovação do espaço cultural europeu*, ed. N.C. Soares, C. Teixeira, Coimbra 2017, p. 82.

118 Oration “Constantinopolitana clades” of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (15 October 1454, Frankfurt), ed. and transl. M. von Cotta-Schönberg. Final Version, 2024, Collected Orations of Pope Pius II, vol. 22, p. 30, <https://hal.science/hal-01097147v2> (access: 28.10.2024); cf. B. Karageorgos, *Der Begriff Europa...*, p. 149, footnote 59.

119 K. Oschema, *Medieval Europe – Object and Ideology*, in: *Ideas off for Europe*, ed. T. Pinheiro, B. Cieszynska, J. Eduardo Franco, Frankfurt a. M. 2012, p. 65.

separately. So, Honorius devoted a total of about 5.5 pages to the discussion of Europe.¹²⁰ More than 400 years later, in the mid 16th century, Sebastian Münster began his account of the world in his *Cosmography* with Europe, which was described (in the German-language Basel edition from 1550) in 1080 pages. In contrast, he devoted a total of only 70 pages to Asia and the “new islands,” and 79 pages to Africa.¹²¹

The importance of Europe for Münster was reflected not only in the extent of its description. The geographer preceded this description with an extensive laudation of the home continent, beginning with words indicating its superiority to the rest of the world: “Haec est una ex tribus orbis partibus, complectiturque terram eximie fertilem, habens naturalem temperiem, caelumque satis clemens; frugum, vini et arborum copia nullis posthabenda, sed optimis terris comparanda. Est adeo amoena, pulcherrimisque urbibus, castris, vicis & pagis exornata, virtute denique populorum tam praestans, ut longe superet Asiam aut Aphricam, quantumlibet illae terrae sint maiores” (This is one of the three parts of the world, and includes an exceptionally fertile land, having a temperate climate, and being endowed with the prosperity of heavens; the supply of grain, wine, and trees are not inferior to any others, but comparable to those from best countries. It is so pleasant, and adorned with the most beautiful cities, castles, towns, and villages, and so leads the way in the virtues of the inhabitants, that it far surpasses Asia or Africa, however greater those lands may be).¹²² Also, it was not until the 16th century that phrases like “we Europeans” or “our Europe” began to appear in travellers’ accounts as an expression of a sense of difference from the foreign lands they visited.¹²³ As Rudolf Hiestand put it, with only a slight exaggeration, “die Europaidee löst das Mittelalter ab” - “the idea of Europe replaces the Middle Ages”.¹²⁴

ABSTRACT

The text explores the concept of Europe in medieval geographical and cultural contexts, highlighting various interpretations and representations of the continent throughout history. The text addresses such issues as Europe’s place within the ecumene, its borders and the characteristic elements of the way it was depicted in cartography and written sources. Additionally, the text addresses the political implications of the term “Europe,” in the time of the Carolingian

120 Honorius Augustodunensis, *Imago...*, pp. 52-66.

121 M. Hoogvliet, *The Wonders...*, p. 248.

122 S. Münster, *Cosmographiae universalis libri VI*, Basel 1572, p. [9].

123 K. Oschema, *Der Europa-Begriff...*, p. 219.

124 R. Hiestand, “Europa” im Mittelalter..., p. 36.

and Ottonian dynasties often associated with the authority of the Western Emperor. It also discusses the emergence of the sense of European superiority in the Later Middle Ages, as well as the birth of the modern emotional attitude towards Europe from the mid 15th century onwards.

Key words: Medieval Europe; geographical imaginations; history of cartography; European identity

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EUROPE IN THE TRIPARTITE DIVISION OF THE EARTH: HERODOTEAN IMAGE OF THE WORLD IN THE *ETYMOLOGIAE* BY ISIDORE OF SEVILLE



When, in the 5th century BC, Herodotus of Halicarnassus, the author of the *Historiae*, was describing Europe, Asia, and Libia, the only three continents known in antiquity, he stated that he could not help laughing at the absurdity of contemporary map-makers who presented the Ocean running like a river around a perfectly circular earth, with Europe and Asia being of the same size.¹ Despite the apparent scepticism and criticism expressed by Herodotus and the uncertainty he voiced about the existence of various lands and nations, his *Historiae* became a groundwork against which other ancient authors would shape the knowledge of the world. His perspective would then form a specific *topos* of the tripartite earth, and for the next several centuries, the perception of the world divided into three parts, with the ocean surrounding the continents, would ultimately be recorded and perpetuated in the early medieval written works. One of these early medieval narratives, the *Etymologiae* by the Spanish Bishop of Seville, Isidore, would provide a benchmark for all the medieval maps

1 Herodotus, *The Persian Wars (Historiae)*, transl. A.D. Godley, Cambridge MA 1920, section 4.36.2 (“[...] γελῶ δὲ ὁρέων γῆς περιόδους γράψαντας πολλοὺς ἤδη καὶ οὐδένα νοονεχόντως ἐξηγησάμενον: οἱ Ὀκεανὸν τε ῥέοντα γράφουσι πέριξ τὴν γῆν ἐοῦσαν κυκλοτερέα ὡς ἀπὸ τόρνου, καὶ τὴν Ἀσίην τῇ Εὐρώπῃ ποιούντων ἴσην.”); hereafter cited as Hdt. *Hist.* See also F. Lukremann, *The Concept of Location in Classical Geography*, “Annals of the Association of American Geographers” 51 (1961), 2, p. 203.

of the world.² The schematism of the medieval maps will reflect the underlying principles of ancient authors' descriptions of the three continents. However, it should be noted that the ancient sources never approached each continent with the same interest and never included an equal amount of details considering the inhabitants of various regions or the geographical limits of different lands. In this tripartite world image, Europe is hardly ever presented as the most important. Nor is it the most captivating. The attitude of individual ancient authors towards the European continent they know and understand well is also frequently ambivalent. Whether as a continent or a conglomeration of regions, Europe is often introduced in the narratives as the embodiment of the civilised world, representing what is already acknowledged and, consequently, having positive overtures. On the other hand, however, Europe is - more often than not - perceived in the ancient sources only as an addition to a broader polemic about the unknown countries and mysterious regions of Asia and Africa. Even though generations of ancient historians questioned and verified hypotheses about Europe, this very rudimentary - sometimes even simplified - ancient optics of the world survived for centuries, highlighting the enduring nature of historical perceptions of Europe. This continuity of knowledge persisted until the moment when the tripartite division of the earth began to be neatly inscribed into Christian symbolism concerning the three sons of Noah.³ In order to address the role Europe played against the background of the two other continents in the narratives on the tripartite division of the earth, it is necessary to verify whether the never-changing image of Europe - as a "well-known", "unchanging," and "civilised" continent - reflected a complete stagnation in the development of knowledge about the continents and geographical discoveries in ancient times, or if the views about Europe expressed in the early medieval work by Isidore of Seville were connected to the deliberate maintenance of ties with the classical geographical *topos*, in which Europe was considered the most well-studied and best understood.

ANCIENT SOURCES AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE KNOWN WORLD

The studies on the tripartite division of the earth and the image of Europe within this pattern should begin with the re-evaluation of Herodorus' account about the then continents. Despite the general belief that Herodotus

2 D. Woodward, *Medieval Mappaemundi*, in: *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, Chicago 1987, pp. 301-304 and 320-321; E. Edson, *World Maps and Easter Tables: Medieval Maps in Context*, "Imago Mundi" 48 (1996), pp. 27-32; A. Krawiec, *Jerozolima jako środek świata w średniowiecznej geografii kreacyjnej*, "Studia Periegetica" 5 (2010), p. 89; I. Baumgärter, *Mapping Narrations - Narrating Maps. Concepts of the World in the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period*, Berlin 2022, pp. 8-13.

3 J. Williams, *Isidore, Orosius and the Beatus Map*, "Imago Mundi" 49 (1997), pp. 13-14.

was responsible for establishing the narrative about three great geographical areas,⁴ his *Histories* aimed at reshaping the profile of the known world. Herodotus paid much attention to describing Europe, Libya, and Asia, but at the same time, he pointed out that the prevailing belief in the existence of three separate continents was inaccurate and inconsistent with his own research. He maintains the necessity of adding the region of Egypt and the entire Delta to the geographical image of the world, which, in his opinion, consists not of three but of four parts.⁵ In accordance with this hypothesis, almost the entire second book of the *Histories* is dedicated to meticulous explanations of Egypt's geography, history, borders, and, finally, the Egyptian people, their religious practices, and daily habits.⁶ Although his suggestion about the four continents was never substantiated by any other sources, his characterisation of all the geographical regions and their inhabitants known in the 5th century BC became a reference point for all the future geographers, historians, and naturalists writing about faraway lands and extraordinary nations. Herodotus' writings on Europe are as elaborately developed and stylistically vivid as the narratives about Asia and Libia (Africa). However, as a researcher interested primarily in the reasons for the outbreak of war between the Hellenes and the Persians,⁷ Herodotus wishes to verify and advance the knowledge about Asia more than the information about Europe he possesses. The continent of Asia is set as the focal point of his research as he painstakingly reports on its borders, mountains, rivers, mythical creatures, peoples' customs, and rites.⁸ Compared to Asia, Herodotean Europe emerges as a relatively ordinary and common land. When writing about Europe's borders, Herodotus ponders mainly the northern and eastern

4 K.J. Leyser, *Concepts of Europe in the Early and High Middle Ages*, "Past & Present" 137 (1992), pp. 27-28; J. Wojtanowicz, *Europejska przestrzeń geograficzno-kulturowa*, Lublin 2009, pp. 22-23.

5 Hdt. *Hist.*, section 2.16. 2 ("τέταρτον γὰρ δὴ σφεας δεῖ προσλογίζεσθαι Αἰγύπτου τὸ Δέλτα, εἰ μὴτε γε ἐστὶ τῆς Ἀσίας μὴτε τῆς Λιβύης: οὐ γὰρ δὴ ὁ Νεῖλός γε ἐστὶ κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον ὁ τὴν Ἀσίην οὐρίζων τῇ Λιβύῃ, τοῦ Δέλτα δὲ τούτου κατὰ τὸ ὄξυ περιωρήγνυται ὁ Νεῖλος, ὥστε ἐν τῷ μεταξύ Ἀσίας τε καὶ Λιβύης γίνοιτ' ἄν.").

6 Scholarship on Herodotus' descriptions and assessment of Egypt is extensive. It is sufficient to mention here some of the most relevant works on the matter: T.W. Africa, *Herodotus and Diodorus on Egypt*, "Journal of Near Eastern Studies" 22 (1963), 4, pp. 254-258; T.S. Brown, *Herodotus Speculates about Egypt*, "The American Journal of Philology" 86 (1965), 1, pp. 60-76; O.K. Armayor, *Did Herodotus Ever Go to Egypt*, "Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt" 15 (1978), pp. 59-73; A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus' Account of Pharaonic History*, "Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte" 37 (1988), 1, pp. 22-53.

7 Hdt. *Hist.*, section 1.1.0 ("Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνησέος ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἥδε, ὡς μὴτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἐξίτηλα γένηται, μὴτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμάστα, τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλεᾶ γένηται, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ δι' ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοισι.").

8 See particularly book three and four of the *Histories*.

limits of the continent, but because these are unknown, he decides not to speculate about the unconfirmed areas.⁹ In contrast to the lengthy discussions concerning the limits of Asia and Africa, any educated guesses about the edges of Europe are quickly abandoned; the peripheries of Europe are so distant to Herodotus that he pays them practically no attention. The only statement he makes refers to the size of Europe - he believes it is the largest of all the known continents.¹⁰

Of all the wondrous lands described in the *Histories*, Herodotus limits most all the details about the continent he knows and understands best. A similar narrative model can also be observed in other ancient authors who juxtaposed Europe with Asia and Africa.¹¹ In Herodotus' eyes, Europe is merely a geographical space, but because the continent is so diverse that it eludes simple definitions, Herodotus bases his own identity on cultural factors and political conditions. He avoids any geographically determined notions of his background, even though aspects of culture, politics, and geographical location were undoubtedly complementing each other and had an impact on one's deep sense of belonging to the Greek world.¹² Herodotus presents himself as coming from the civilised part of the world, Hellas, which he compares to and contrasts with the best known of the "foreign" lands, Persia. According to Herodotus, the Persians are a barbarian, effeminate, weak, and subservient nation.¹³ Nevertheless, the characterisation of the Hellenes and Persians outlined in this way is not formulated by Herodotus only on the basis of their European and Asian (or European *versus* Asian) origins. Instead, their identity is crystallised solely by the policies pursued by two nations living such different lives. The imperial ambition of the Persians defines their culture, customs, and behaviours, not the borders of their lands, which Herodotus considers arbitrary and, as he suspects, wrongly marked. Simultaneously, he does not see any contradiction in the fact that he does not fully grasp the geographical scope of the world he comes from. The most critical factor in defining his

9 Hdt. *Hist.*, section 4.45.1 ("ἡ δὲ Εὐρώπη πρὸς οὐδαμῶν φανερὴ ἐστὶ γινωσκομένη, οὐτε τὰ πρὸς ἥλιον ἀνατέλλοντα οὐτε τὰ πρὸς βορέην, εἰ περίρρυτος ἐστί: μήκει δὲ γινώσκεται παρ' ἀμφοτέρω παρήκουσα.").

10 Ibidem, section 4.42.1 ("θωμάζω ὧν τῶν διουρισάντων καὶ διελόντων Λιβύην τε καὶ Ἀσίην καὶ Εὐρώπην: οὐ γὰρ σμικρὰ τὰ διαφέροντα αὐτέων ἐστί: μήκει μὲν γὰρ παρ' ἀμφοτέρω παρήκει ἡ Εὐρώπη, εὖρος δὲ πέρι οὐδὲ συμβάλλειν ἄξιη φαίνεται μοι εἶναι.").

11 E.g. Polybius, Strabo, Pliny the Elder.

12 Despite acknowledging the bravery of the people originating from Europe, particularly the Scythian and Thracian tribes, he refrains from associating any of these groups, or other smaller ethnic communities in Europe, with the cultural circle from which he originates.

13 E.g., D.M. Lewis, *Persians in Herodotus*, in: *The Greek Historians: Literature and History Papers presented to A. E. Raubitschek*, ed. M.H. Jameson, Saratoga 1985, p. 89-104; P. Georges, *Barbarian Asia and the Greek Experience: From the Archaic Period to the Age of Xenophon*, Baltimore 1994, pp. 49-58.

own identity is the understanding of the cultural and political scope of Hellas; time and again, Herodotus confirms his strong ties with the Hellenic culture that serves as a point of reference for understanding other lands, which he can explain only through the prism of his own microcosm.

When Herodotus decides to juxtapose Europe with Asia or Libya, he does so only to explore the origins of the terminology associated with these regions. Referring to myths and legends, he cites the story of the Greeks kidnapping Europa, the daughter of the Phoenician king (and therefore a king from the continent of Asia), as compensation for the criminal act of kidnapping Io, the daughter of the king of Argos, from the European Peloponnese, by the Phoenicians.¹⁴ In this way, he outlines the revenge of the Hellenes on the Phoenicians, weaving into his narrative the motif of symbolically making Europa a subject of the Greeks. Europa is, in fact, regarded as an Asiatic woman, and therefore Herodotus openly states that he does not know the reasons for naming the continent he knows as “Europe” with an Asian name.¹⁵ This theme will reappear in the myth referred to by Moschus in the 2nd century BC, in which Europa learns that she was kidnapped by the Greek god Zeus, who takes her to Crete.¹⁶ Europa, who lives in Crete

14 Hdt. *Hist.*, section 1.2.1-3 (“οὕτω μὲν Ἰοῦν ἐς Αἴγυπτον ἀπικέσθαι λέγουσι Πέρσαι, οὐκ ὥς Ἕλληνές, καὶ τῶν ἀδικημάτων πρῶτον τοῦτο ἄρξαι. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα Ἕλλήνων τινάς (οὐ γὰρ ἔχουσι τοῦνομα ἀπηγήσασθαι) φασι τῆς Φοινίκης ἐς Τύρον προσσχόντας ἀρπάσαι τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν θυγατέρα Εὐρώπην. εἶσαν δ' ἂν οὗτοι Κρήτες. ταῦτα μὲν δι' ἴσα πρὸς ἴσα σφι γενέσθαι, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα Ἕλληνας αἰτίους τῆς δευτέρης ἀδικίης γενέσθαι: καταπλώσαντας γὰρ μακρῇ νηὶ ἐς Αἶαν τε τὴν Κολχίδα καὶ ἐπὶ Φᾶσιν ποταμόν, ἐνθεῦτεν, διαπρηξάμενους καὶ τᾶλλα τῶν εἵνεκεν ἀπίκато, ἀρπάσαι τοῦ βασιλέως τὴν θυγατέρα Μηδείην. πέμψαντά δὲ τὸν Κόλχων βασιλέα ἐς τὴν Ἑλλάδα κήρυκα αἰτέειν τε δίκας τῆς ἀρπαγῆς καὶ ἀπαιτέειν τὴν θυγατέρα. τοὺς δὲ ὑποκρίνασθαι ὥς οὐδὲ ἐκείνοι Ἰοὺς τῆς Ἀργείης ἔδοσαν σφι δίκας τῆς ἀρπαγῆς: οὐδὲ ὦν αὐτοὶ δώσειν ἐκείνοισι.”).

15 Ibidem, section 4.45.4-5 (“ἡ δὲ δι' Εὐρώπην οὔτε εἰ περὶ ὅρουτος ἐστὶ γινώσκεται πρὸς οὐδαμῶν ἀνθρώπων, οὔτε ὁκόθεν τὸ οὐνομα ἔλαβε τοῦτο, οὔτε ὅστις οἱ ἦν ὁ θέμενος φαίνεται, εἰ μὴ ἀπὸ τῆς Τυρίας φήσομεν Εὐρώπης λαβεῖν τὸ οὐνομα τὴν χώραν: πρότερον δὲ ἦν ἄρα ἀνώνυμος ὥσπερ αἱ ἕτεραι. ἀλλ' αὕτη γε ἐκ τῆς Ἀσίας τε φαίνεται ἐοῦσα καὶ οὐκ ἀπικομένη ἐς τὴν γῆν ταύτην ἣτις νῦν ὑπὸ Ἑλλήνων Εὐρώπη καλέεται, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἐκ Φοινίκης ἐς Κρήτην, ἐκ Κρήτης δὲ ἐς Λυκίην.”).

16 The myth was regularly included by ancient authors (Eusebius, Ovid, and Apollodorus) and it finds its way also to Isidore's narrative (*The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, transl. S.A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, O. Berghof, M. Hall, Cambridge 2006, section 3.71.24 (*Quod signum gentiles ideo inter signa primum constituerunt, quia in Martio mense, qui est anni principium, solem in eo signo cursum suum agere dicunt. Sed et Taurum inter sidera conlocant, et ipsum in honorem Iovis, eo quod in bovem sit fabulose conversus, quando Europam transvexit*) and 8.11.35 (*Quem modo taurum fingunt propter Europae raptum; fuit enim in navi cuius insigne erat taurus: modo Danaes per imbrem aureum appetisse concubitum; ubi intellegitur pudicitiam mulieris ab auro fuisse corruptam: modo in similitudine aquilae, propter quod puerum ad stuprum rapuerit: modo serpentem, quia reptaverit, et cygnum, quia cantaverit*). Hereafter cited as: Isid. *Etymolog.*

after her abduction, will eventually become the queen of the island.¹⁷ As a character, she is therefore created as symbolically subordinate to the Hellenes because they made her the most essential part of their world (a queen) and contributed to civilising her. The use of this mythical element seems particularly important because, over the centuries, it will consolidate the vision of a very specific origin of Europe - even if only through the narrative of the personification of the continent. It will also shape the sense of European dominance (the continent as a royal figure), and finally, it will serve to adapt the all-encompassing confidence in Europe's superiority over Asia.

THE ROMANS IN EUROPE: REINFORCING THE DIVIDED WORLD

Herodotus' identification with the European continent was fundamentally rooted in his affiliation with the Greek cultural milieu. In contrast, the authors who were eyewitnesses of the Roman conquests articulated their identities and their interest in conveying *Romanitas* in relation to the ever-expanding borders of the established *imperium*. The schematic division of the world into three parts, still effectively maintained by authors such as Strabo, Pomponius Mela, and Pliny the Elder, contributed to the shaping of Europe's image, but largely in the ideological context of Rome's military domination.¹⁸ When Pompey the Great celebrated his triumph in 61 BC, he announced that he had achieved victory over three continents: Europe - for defeating the Celts and Iberians on the Iberian Peninsula; Asia - for campaigns in the East, especially for defeating Mithridates VI, King of Pontus, and for conquering kingdoms in Asia Minor, Syria, and Palestine; and Africa - for campaigns in the north of the continent.¹⁹ All three geographical regions are presented as dominated by the Roman general as a result of the same circumstances of wars and conflicts. All regions are treated uniformly as Roman provinces that are both subject to, and integral to, the enormous empire. Europe, subjugated just

17 Europa bore three sons from her union with Zeus: Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Sarpedon. Each of these sons played a key role in Greek mythology (see Apollodorus, *The Library*, transl. J.G. Frazer, Cambridge MA 1921, section 3.1.1, and Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, transl. F.J. Miller, Cambridge MA 1916, section 2.833 ff.).

18 Strabo and Pliny the Elder provide the descriptions of Europe first, only to transition to narratives about other regions (see, e.g., Strabo, *Geography*, transl. H.L. Jones, Cambridge MA 1917, section 2.5.18ff., 11.1.1 ff., 17.1.2 ff.; Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, Volume II: Books 3-7, transl. H. Rackham, Cambridge MA 1942, section 3.1-30, 5.1-14, 6.1-31; hereafter cited as Plin. NH). This divergent focus underscores the varying priorities and cultural perspectives of these ancient geographers in their engagement with the world.

19 Plutarch, *Lives*, Volume V: *Agessilaus and Pompey. Pelopidas and Marcellus*, transl. B. Perrin, Cambridge MA 1917, section 45.5; Appian, *Roman History*, ed. and transl. B. McGing, Cambridge MA 1912, section 17.116-117.

like Asia and Africa, is simply one of the three determinants in the notion of a constantly expanding superpower. The inclusion of geographical terminology and continents' names in the description of Pompey's triumph serves primarily as an indication of the ongoing strategy of territorial expansion rather than a means of fostering ideological unity among distant populations. When Julius Caesar conquered Gaul and became the first Roman to set off on a military expedition to Britain in the 1st century BC, his goal was to gain glory as an army leader, taking over more territories, regardless of their geographical location.²⁰ In his detailed description of the military campaign in *De Bello Gallico*, Caesar does not identify the areas of Gaul and Britain as Europe; he defines them only through the prism of their highly different political, cultural, and customary life than the one he leads as a Roman. Caesar's triumph in 46 BC, like Pompey's earlier success, is a re-commemoration of the enslavement of three continents: Europe - for the conquest of Gaul and the defeat of Vercingetorix, Asia - for the victory over Pharnaces II, king of Pontus, Africa - for the victories over the supporters of Pompey at the Battle of Thapsus in North Africa.²¹ Once again, Europe and the other two continents are presented as equally subjugated spaces under the rule of Rome. The empire of Caesar and the emperors who followed him and continued the conquests of the territories we know today as Europe was always primarily a Roman, never European empire.²²

As the Roman Empire expanded, references in various sources reflected an increasingly sophisticated understanding of the European continent, resulting in the creation of more detailed maps, such as Marcus Agrippa's map from the 1st century AD.²³ The actual physical reach of the Roman provinces began to shape geographical knowledge and dominate the narrative about provincial regions as well-ordered and well-governed areas of the world. Although the imperial rhetoric often spoke of subjugating entire continents, it was the concept of political borders that ultimately

20 Caesar, *The Gallic War*, transl. H. J. Edwards, Cambridge MA 1917, section 4.20-35, 5.1, 8-23; Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, transl. E. Cary, H.B. Foster, Cambridge MA 1914, section 39.50-53, 40.1-3; Florus, *Epitome of Roman History*, transl. E.S. Forster, Cambridge MA 1929, section 1.45

21 Plutarch, *Lives, Volume VII: Life of Caesar*, transl. B. Perrin, Cambridge MA 1919, section 55.1-3.

22 It is worth noting the opinion expressed by R. Balzetti (*The Creation of Europe*, "History Workshop" 33 (1992), p. 182), who argues that "there was no such thing as a cohesive European identity" in the first five centuries. It seems equally valid to state that the notion of a singular Roman *imperium* was a mere reflection of the vast territories of land joined and governed under one (Roman) authority. However, this geopolitical unity did not represent a unified identity encompassing various religions, ethnicities, and customs present within its dominion.

23 Plin. *NH*, section 3.16-17 and 6.139; commentary on the map in J. Strzelczyk, *Odkrywanie Europy*, Poznań 2000, pp. 222-227.

defined the Roman cultural and geographical identity. Conversely, in regions under Roman control, the conquered people continued to define themselves according to their own cultural values and local geography.

It should be emphasised that the Romans' conquests were primarily influenced by the inherent limitations imposed by weather and climate. These factors guided their military campaigns not toward northeastern Europe but rather toward Asia. The prevailing belief was that the kingdoms and empires situated in the Far East were worth conquering and integrating into the borders of the Roman Empire. Though geographically distant from the empire's centre, the Parthian Kingdom was regarded as a more significant target than many other areas closer to Europe and Africa. It is also noteworthy how the decision to embark on a campaign against the Parthians was shaped by the understanding that these areas had already been mapped out. Their knowledge of the eastern frontiers assured the Romans that they could effectively prepare for a military expedition, occupy Parthia, and then manage it as a new province within their empire.²⁴ The disastrous expeditions of the Roman generals Marcus Crassus and Marcus Antonius proved that the lack of detailed geographical knowledge about Parthia resulted in the lost campaigns.²⁵ Following a peace agreement with the Parthian Kingdom, the Romans once again turned their efforts against nations living in Europe. The military campaign against Germania, as described by Tacitus, reinforced the notion that - in the Roman worldview - Europe was a broad concept, significant only in terms of the vastness of the territories the Romans wanted to conquer.²⁶ When Tacitus refers to Germania, not even once does he mention that these lands are part of Europe; instead, he locates them geographically, indicating they are situated by the Rhine and the Danube River.²⁷ After suffering a devastating defeat in the Teutoburg Forest,

²⁴ The Romans indeed dared to venture into new territories. However, the decision to temporarily suspend their conquests in Europe probably stemmed from a sense of the difficulties and challenges that further military campaigns could pose for the Romans in northern and northeastern Europe. In contrast, Parthia seemed more tangible as a target, offering opportunities for looting and prosperity. In terms of the perception of the world at that time and the Romans' knowledge of geography, an essential aspect in examining the military campaigns of the Roman legions was their conviction that they had sufficient knowledge of the territories they intended to conquer. Cf. A. Keaveney, *The King and the War-Lords: Romano-Parthian Relations Circa 64-53 B.C.*, "American Journal of Philology" 103 (1982), 4, p. 419; S. Hornblower, *Greeks and Persians: West Against East*, in: *War, Peace and World Orders in European History*, ed. A.V. Hartmann, B. Heuser, New York 2001, p. 54.

²⁵ Plutarch, *Life of Crassus*, transl. B. Perrin, Cambridge MA 1916, section 21-31; Plutarch, *Life of Antony*, transl. B. Perrin, Cambridge MA 1920, section 50-54.

²⁶ Cf. Z. M. Tan, *Subversive Geography in Tacitus' Germania*, "The Journal of Roman Studies" 104 (2014), p. 183.

²⁷ Tacitus, *Annals*, transl. J. Jackson, Cambridge MA 1937, section 1.59.

the Romans withdrew to the Elbe, which would serve for many years as a boundary not only between the known and unknown territories but also between the Roman Empire and the realm of the barbarians (*barbaricum*).

ISIDORE OF SEVILLE: EUROPE OR THE REST OF THE WORLD?

A simplified perspective of Europe would dominate the following centuries, forming the foundation for geographical narratives of both the known and unknown world. In late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, scholars would base their understanding of the three continents not on personal travel or direct observations of topography and geography but rather on ancient works. A notable example of this relational depiction of Europe can be found in the work of Isidore of Seville, who was considered a leading authority on geography at the turn of the 6th and 7th centuries AD. His *Etymologiae* became a vital source of information for the creation of medieval maps. In his account, Isidore refers to Europe as the second continent and the third part of the globe.²⁸ Despite the centuries since the narratives of Claudius Ptolemy, Orosius, and Jordanes, some of Europe's borders still remain unspecified in Isidore's work. This observation, however, reflects not so much Isidore's limited interest in his examination of the European continent but rather his unique approach to explaining the reality around him. Isidore draws upon ancient methods of conveying knowledge about the world by organising it geographically and referencing the established "order" of the globe. He adheres to a tripartite division of the world, which he believed provided a systematic framework for describing Europe. The first description of the three continents is included previously in Isidore's earlier work, *De Natura Rerum*, where Europe is referred to only in geographical terms. The continent is described as situated across the sea from Africa, and it comprises, together with Africa, one section of the globe with two parts. In contrast, Asia is regarded by Isidore as a distinct part of the world with its unique character. He reinforces this perspective by referencing Augustine's assertion that Asia is the most blessed of the three continents.²⁹ In doing so, Isidore reinforced and perpetuated the notion of Asia, rather than Europe, as the most exceptional part of the world, thereby promoting its inherent value. Even though Isidore was not well-acquainted with the continent of Asia, his

28 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 14.4.2 (*Post Asiam ad Europam stilum vertendum. Europa quippe Agenoris regis Libyae filia fuit, quam Iovis ab Africa raptam Cretam advexit, et partem tertiam orbis ex eius nomine appellavit. Iste est autem Agenor Libyae filius, ex qua et Libya, id est Africa, fertur cognominata; unde apparet prius Libyam accepisse vocabulum, postea Europam. Europa autem in tertiam partem orbis divisa incipit a flumine Tanai*).

29 For the original fragment, see J. Fontaine, *Isidore de Seville: traite de la nature*, Bordeaux 1960, p. 325.

works only supported the ancient concept of Asia being the same size as Europe and Africa combined. This established the foundations for the Isidorian tradition, which determined the position of Asia in the tripartite model and influenced the early medieval maps.³⁰

In the *Etymologiae*, Isidore posits that the first region of Europe is Lower Scythia.³¹ The reason for referring to Lower Scythia as a starting point in his description of Europe remains uncertain. However, it is plausible that Isidore believed ancient scholars who had regarded Europe as a continent that originated at the Tanais (Don) River, thus designating this area as “first.” While acknowledging this region as European, Isidore immediately characterises it also as *barbaricum*.³² He delineates the barbarian territories as the lands situated north and northeast of the Danube, thereby reinforcing the notion of political and military borders established in antiquity, which regarded the river as a natural boundary protecting the Roman Empire from barbarian invasions. The strengthening of the concept that Europe was divided into two parts at the time when the work *Etymologiae* was written in the 7th century AD is particularly noteworthy in this context, primarily because until the 6th century AD, the Danube border was frequently destabilised and existed mainly as a symbolic line between the two worlds. Isidore himself came from Spain, which during his lifetime was under the rule of the Visigoths, a group of people described as barbaric by ancient authors who must have been known to the Spanish scholar.³³ Isidore, however, does not touch upon this issue - his interpretation of Europe is not based on reorienting generally known truths but on maintaining them in their classical version. The maps produced during the Middle Ages, which drew upon Isidore’s work, will also be marked by a schematic representation of the globe, organised and arranged according to ancient accounts and extant ancient maps. These maps typically illustrate the division of the world into three continents, occasionally including the antipodes as an additional region in the far south. This depiction of the world is presented conventionally, reflecting areas that were once Roman provinces, with provincial terminology predominating in medieval cartography. In his description, Isidore distinguishes between geographical spaces labelled as ‘lands’ (*terra*) and ‘territories’ (*loci*), which together formed the individual ancient provinces.³⁴ Following this

30 J. Williams, *Isidore...*, pp. 13-15.

31 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 14.4.3 (*Prima Europae regio Scythia inferior, quae a Maeotidis paludibus incipiens inter Danubium et Oceanum septentrionalem usque ad Germaniam porrigitur*).

32 *Ibidem* [...] *quae terra generaliter propter barbaras gentes, quibus inhabitatur, Barbarica dicitur*).

33 Jordanes, *Romana and Getica*, transl. P. van Nuffelen, L. van Hoof, Liverpool 2020, section 5.30.40 (*Unde et paene omnibus barbaris Gothi sapientiores semper exstiterunt Graecisque paene consimiles [...]*).

34 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 14.5.20.

framework, right after Scythia, Isidore sequentially describes Germania, Thrace, Greece, and Macedonia, including Thessaly, Pannonia, Gaul, and ultimately Spain. This portrayal of Europe offers a simplified version of what Isidore likely knew and studied regarding its territories. Nonetheless, this characterisation aims only to uphold a traditional - and rather conventional - description of the world, reflecting the influences of the ancient sources that Isidore himself read and referred to in the *Etymologiae*.

The influence of antiquity is unmistakable in the narratives surrounding the early medieval world.³⁵ Europe is portrayed geographically as a collection of provinces, recognisable and familiar. However, Isidore's curiosity drives him, as a researcher, to explore intriguing and often unverified topics. For instance, he revisits the curious notion of the vast quantities of precious stones and gold found in the Asian part of Scythia, which remain inaccessible to people due to the fearsome griffins that guard these treasures.³⁶ His account likely echoes, perhaps unwittingly, the work *Argonautica*, written in the 3rd century BC by Apollonius of Rhodes, which recounts the journey of Jason and his companions in search of the Golden Fleece, protected by a menacing dragon or serpent.³⁷ Ethiopia, which Isidore accurately identifies as part of Libya/Africa - unlike Egypt, which he locates in Asia - is described as home to dangerous creatures, including giant dragons from whose brains precious stones are extracted.³⁸ This portrayal resonates with Herodotus' descriptions of wild dragons and other unknown animals inhabiting Ethiopia.³⁹ However, Isidore's familiarity with Herodotus' work

35 Isidore's universal inclusion of ancient knowledge is also identifiable in his other works, e.g., *Chronicon*, in which Isidore provides a historical overview from the creation of the world to his own time, integrating biblical history with secular events (more in P. Merritt Bassett, *The Use of History in the Chronicon of Isidore of Seville*, "History and Theory" 15 (1976), 3, pp. 286-291). T. Krynicka ("Desine gentilibus iam inservire poetis..." (versus XI 9). *Chrześcijańscy epicy w bibliotece Izydora z Sewilli*, "Vox Patrum" 33/60 (2013), p. 192) states that "Isidore treats the sources with the freedom characteristic of an expert" [transl. from Polish by the Author], linking the universal ancient and Christian truths in his unique writings. The classicising nature of Isidore's writings was argued by J. Fontaine, *Théorie et pratique du style chez Isidore de Séville*, "Vigiliae Christianae" 14 (1960), 2, pp. 68 and 86-89 (see particularly p. 71: "Isidore apparaît d'abord comme le théoricien d'un classicisme exigeant, jusque dans le détail du vocabulaire, et particulièrement sensible aux valeurs de concision.").

36 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 14.3.32; cf. fragments: 12.2.17, 14.3.7.

37 Jason's myth was used throughout antiquity in nearly all the geographical works, from Homer to Apollonius, Valerius Flaccus, and finally, Strabo and Eratosthenes; apart from strictly mythical elements in Homer, Strabo attempted to re-establish Homer as the major source for all the geographical knowledge even in the 1st c. AD (C. Connors, Eratosthenes, *Strabo, and the Geographer's Gaze*, "Pacific Coast Philology" 46 (2011), 2, p. 144). For the impact of the myth on geographical knowledge, see J. Strzelczyk, *Odkrywanie...*, pp. 56-65.

38 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 14.5.15.

39 Hdt. *Hist.*, section 2.15, 2.68, and 2.69; cf. 3.107-108.

was likely limited to sentiments expressed by Herodotus and expanded in the writings of Pliny the Elder. Although some of the segments referring to mythical creatures could be verified in the narratives of ancient authors who were less inclined to recount fantastical stories, such as Pliny the Elder or Strabo, Isidore appears particularly keen on relaying details about mysterious beings and distant places, just as Herodotus had done in his work.⁴⁰ While Isidore spends relatively little time speculating about such phenomena in Europe, he pays much more attention to inexplicable occurrences in Asia and Africa. Isidore exercises particular caution when discussing these far-flung regions. In contrast, his observations about Europe are presented more assertively, including declarations regarding the continent's geography and history and well-established facts about the locations of its rivers, mountains, and islands. An example of such a contextualised approach is the detail about Sicily, which the author describes as "once the homeland of the Cyclops and later the cradle of tyranny."⁴¹ In a single sentence, Isidore intertwines mythological elements with the actual political history of the island, not only overlooking the dissonance that arises from juxtaposing these two distinct elements but also presenting them as integral components in the development and organisation of Sicily throughout the centuries. Furthermore, he references ancient sources when discussing European regions, specifically Sallust and Lucan.⁴² In contrast, when addressing Asia and the far southern areas (*de inferioribus*), he relies predominantly on Homer and Virgil, portraying the extremities of the world through poetic fragments from two of the most celebrated ancient poets.⁴³ This diversity of ancient

40 J. Strzelczyk (*Średniowieczny obraz świata*, Poznań 2004, p. 50) argues that the advancement of geographical knowledge in antiquity was halted by the growth of interest in the known oikumene instead of the "outside" world. However, it is important to recognise that what Strzelczyk defines as a waning interest in discovering the distant regions was, in fact, a consequence of the crisis the Roman Empire was facing, the internal military conflicts within the imperium, and the ongoing - and increasingly more effective - attacks from the Goths. The stagnation in the expansion of geographical knowledge beyond the Empire was directly proportional to the intensity with which the Romans were trying to preserve their own territories within Europe.

41 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 14.6.33 (*Fuit autem quondam patria Cyclopum, et postea nutrix tyrannorum [...]*).

42 Isidore refers in his work to Sallust in: section 14.6.34; Lucan: section 14.8.9 and 14.8.17.

43 Isidore cites Virgil numerous times (e.g., sections 14.3.33, 14.8.32, 14.9.4); Homer is cited in 14.3.41. The 14th book of the *Etymologiae* also includes citations from Gnaeus Naevius (14.8.27), Cicero (14.6.23, 14.8.32), Varro (14.8.33), Juvenal (14.8.13) and Statius (14.8.37), but Virgil remains the primary source for Isidore's description of regions and lands. In other books concerning various nations and human nature, Isidore also refers to Plautus (9.3.64, 10.V.278), Horace (10.A.9), Terence (10.O.199), Cicero (10.R.234), Ovid (11.1.5, 11.2.25), Varro (11.1.97, 11.3.1, 11.3.38, 11.4.3), Lucan (11.3.6), but Virgil is still his primary source.

references indicates that Isidore's understanding of geographical concepts concerning Asia markedly differed from his knowledge of Europe. While Europe was deeply rooted in historical realities intertwined with mythical narratives that Isidore recognised and was familiar with, Asia remained perceived as distant, exotic, and dangerous.

Isidore's references to specific sources from respected writers of antiquity underscore his broader access to information about Europe compared to his knowledge of other regions and lands. He appears to have had significantly less insight into Libya and Asia, suggesting a scarcity of information to incorporate into his narrative. Nonetheless, these limitations did not prevent him from providing a detailed account of Asia or less familiar areas such as the antipodes.⁴⁴ While he dismisses the existence of fantastic creatures, such as the giant Geryon and the gorgons, the author of the *Etymologiae* justifies their inclusion in his work by arguing that these irrational beings are essential in explaining certain negative human behaviours.⁴⁵ The rationalisation of elements he does not personally believe in is evident in the *De portentis* section of the *Etymologiae*, where he uses examples from Greek mythology and ancient texts to logically articulate the reasons for the existence of oracles and mythological beings like the Minotaur and the Cyclops. He presents these figures as *portenta*, integral to divine nature, conveying the intentions God wishes to express to humanity in particular and peculiar forms.⁴⁶ Simultaneously, Isidore details various nations he is familiar with, acknowledging their unusual characteristics, which he appears to regard as, if not implausible, then at least not entirely improbable. Thus, in his account, Isidore presents examples of individuals with such large ears that they encompass their entire bodies and those with lower lips so long that they shield their faces from the sun while they sleep; he also mentions people without noses or with completely flat faces devoid of distinctive features.⁴⁷ These peculiar beings, *monstra*, are said to reside in India, Libya, distant parts of Asian Scythia, and the very far East. While Isidore does not

44 Isidore's (*Etymolog.*, section 9.2.133) inclusion of the Antipodeans in his work suggests that he was well aware of Pliny's views regarding human beings living in all parts of the world, including the remote regions of the southern hemisphere (W. D. McCready, *Isidore, the Antipodeans, and the Shape of Earth*, "Isis" 87 (1996), 1, pp. 110-111).

45 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 11.3.28-29 (*Dicuntur autem et alia hominum fabulosa portenta, quae non sunt, sed ficta in causis rerum interpretantur, ut Geryonem Hispaniae regem triplici forma proditum. [...] Gorgones quoque meretrices crinitas serpentibus, quae aspicientes convertebant in lapides, habentes unum oculum quem invicem utebantur*).

46 Ibidem, section 11.3.1-3.

47 Ibidem, section 11.3.18-19. Unlike Herodotus, who refers to cannibalism and savagery typical of the Scythian tribes, Isidore pays attention only to their unusual physical features (J. Strzelczyk, *Odkrywanie...*, pp. 112-114).

directly question or deny the existence of various *monstra*, he refrains from offering further explanations or interpretations concerning these unique groups of people. Notably, none of these distinctively featured populations are found in Europe. Should any fantastical elements arise within the generally known geography of Europe, Isidore immediately provides arguments rationalising the odd details. In the detailed narrative, Isidore offers an interpretation of the mythical Sirens, depicted as half-women, half-birds, who enticed sailors with their enchanting songs along the coast of Sicily. Unlike Homer and Apollonius, who saw Sirens as unique creatures, Isidore suggests that the Sirens were, in reality, ordinary women who worked as prostitutes seducing men; to Isidore, their purported wings and claws symbolise the intoxicating nature of carnal love that elevates people while simultaneously causing them harm.⁴⁸ He also addresses the existence of centaurs, known from the mythology as half-men, half-horses from the areas of Thessaly; he clarifies that they were not mythical creatures but merely a visual illusion that captivated viewers as they observed Thessalian warriors galloping on horseback.⁴⁹ Through his methodical and rational explanations, Isidore of Seville effectively demonstrates that, unlike other continents, Europe is *not* inhabited by people with illogical or fanciful features; if such people or strange phenomena happen to appear, they have a plausible explanation or serve as examples of the divine *natura*.⁵⁰ Isidore subtly distinguishes between what is strictly European - characterised as non-magical, non-fantastical, explicable, and geographically recognised - and the elements that are foreign, strange, and incomprehensible, which he automatically associates with the non-European world.

Isidore's perspective on Europe does not introduce an entirely new understanding of the continent. Instead, the geographical fragments in his work align

48 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 11.3.30-31 (*Secundum veritatem autem meretrices fuerunt, quae transeuntes quoniam deducebant ad egestatem, his fictae sunt inferre naufragia. Alas autem habuisse et ungulas, quia amor et volat et vulnerat*). Cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, Volume I: Books 1-12, transl. A.T. Murray, rev. G.E. Dimock, Cambridge MA 1919, section 12.184-191; Hdt. *Hist.*, 1.23.

49 Isid. *Etymolog.*, section 11.3.37 (*Centauris autem species vocabulum indidit, id est hominem equo mixtum, quos quidam fuisse equites Thessalorum dicunt, sed pro eo quod discurrentes in bello velut unum corpus equorum et hominum viderentur, inde Centauros fictos adseruerunt*). Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, Volume I: Books 1-12, transl. A.T. Murray, rev. W.F. Wyatt, Cambridge MA 1924, section 1.259-273 and 9.485.

50 Isidore's concept of *natura* can and should be juxtaposed with Pliny's notion of various oddities, particularly with regard to the (monstrous) communities living in the faraway lands. Isidore's input to perpetuating the idea of *monstra* is as strong in the 7th century AD as it was in the 1st century AD when Pliny the Elder was describing the wondrous people of distant regions. Pliny's take on the *natura* and nomadic tribes was a reflection of the Herodotean vision of the world (M. Beagon, *Situating Nature's Wonders in Pliny's "Natural History"*, "Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement" 100 (2007), pp. 22-27).

closely with the established canon that perpetuated and, until the 7th century AD, solidified notions of a specific order in the world and its divisions, a framework initiated by ancient authors. Their explanation gradually evolved into a model over the centuries, whereby the ancient Greek and Roman cultures, empires, and beliefs became the sole reference point for portraying other countries and peoples. Europe was thus established as a locus of the civilised world - imperfect and still in the process of improvement, yet more familiar than other continents; it represented a particular organisation and predictability. This vision of a structured Europe served as a steadfast foundation for interpreting new discoveries, peoples, and nations. Despite the undeniable advancements and active shifts in knowledge regarding the territories of all three continents, the tripartite model of a divided world did not change as dynamically. Such an alteration would have disrupted the geographical and political consensus that had been established in antiquity and was effectively adopted during the early Middle Ages. Instead of implementing changes that would necessitate a redefinition of geography, Isidore adheres to ancient sources, adapting their methodologies for dividing lands and framing the description of Europe with simple justifications that mirror the established world order - this time through a Christian lens. Notably, none of the ancient sources perceive or depict Europe as a distinct entity. Its characteristics - whether pertaining to politics, military conquests, or cultural dominance - are illustrated against the backdrop of differences concerning recognised regions in Asia and Africa. In fact, ancient authors often explored these other regions more deeply than they did the less familiar areas within Europe. However, this apparent indifference towards Europe is somewhat paradoxical; the ancient writers express a desire to investigate topics related to Libya or Asia not because they deem European details less significant but rather because Europe is more familiar to them both geographically and culturally.

ABSTRACT

Ancient authors depicted continents with varying degrees of detail and interest. Europe was often viewed as the embodiment of the civilized world, yet its portrayal was ambivalent, serving as a contrast to the more mysterious regions of Asia and Africa. However, this was due not to a disregard for European details but rather because Europe seemed more familiar and culturally understood by the ancient authors. Isidore's portrayal of Europe aligns with traditional geographical views that trace the reader back to Herodotus' image of the world and other ancient Greek and Roman influences, emphasising Europe's role as a familiar and easily recognisable part of the world. Despite centuries that passed between Herodotus and Isidore, the perspective of the 7th-century scholar did not innovate on the existing

tripartite division, as such changes would have disrupted the long-standing geographical and political consensus. Instead, Isidore adapts these ancient frameworks, infusing them with Christian perspectives while maintaining the established order. This simplified ancient view of Europe endured for centuries, illustrating the lasting impact of historical perspectives in the Middle Ages.

Keywords: Herodotus, ancient sources, geography, Europe, Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae*

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THE IMAGE OF EUROPE IN LATE MEDIEVAL CASTILIAN *SUMARIOS*¹



Poland is not as large a kingdom as Hungary, but it is much more populous and has more beautiful towns and villages, and they live more politically than the Hungarians. They are a people of very beautiful bodies and gestures and of sweet conversation, especially to foreigners. The land is very fertile.

They have very good horses. They have great miners of many metals, especially brass and copper. They have little wine, except what is brought from abroad; most of them drink beer. They have great rivers in which there are plenty of good fish.²

This description of Poland is found in the *Crónica Abreviada* (Abridged Chronicle), a historiographical compendium also referred to as *La Valeriana*, a name derived from that of its author, Diego de Valera. Completed in 1481

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² "Polonia es reino no tan grande como Ungria pero es muy más poblado y de más fermosas cibdades y villas, y biven más políticamente que los úngaros. Son gente de muy fermosos cuerpos y gestos y de dulce conversación, mayormente a los estrangeros. Es la tierra asaz fértil. Han muy buenos caballos. Tienen grandes mineros de munchos metales, especialmente de latón y de cobre. Tienen poco vino, salvo lo que de fuera se trae; los más beven servesa. Tienen grandes ríos en que ay muchedumbre de buenos pescados", C. Moya García, *Edición y estudio de 'La Valeriana'*, Madrid 2009, p. 61.

and published in 1482, the *Abreviada* was commissioned by Queen Isabella I of Castile. The purpose of the commission was to summarize the history of the Crown of Castile from its origins to the end of the reign of Isabella's father, John II, who died in 1454.³ To achieve this, Valera planned to begin by geographically situating Castile within the world, as he explains in the opening section:

The following chronicle, most illustrious princess, is divided into four parts. The first deals with the cosmography, division, or partition of the three parts into which the ancient sages divided the world, and the regions or provinces in each of them, that is, Asia, Africa, and Europe.⁴

Subsequently, the twenty-five provinces of Asia are listed - including the Earthly Paradise, Amazonia, and Pentapolis, as well as the sixteen of Africa - stretching across the islands of the Mediterranean, from Cyprus to Corsica, to divide those of Europe according to the nations of Germania - with twenty-three kingdoms, Greece - with ten, Italy - with four, France - with seven, and finally Spain - with nine, since this territorial domain included Gothic France, which was Languedoc, Narbonne, and Toulouse, and Portugal.

In composing this section of the *Crónica Abreviada*, the author drew upon a range of sources, among them several identifiable writers and at least one whose identity remains unknown.⁵ Central to his endeavour, however, was his own perspective as a well-travelled knight - a man of the court whose experiences across diverse regions shaped his understanding of the world. His portrayal of Europe reflects a deliberate synthesis of his personal observations, gathered through his travels, and the intellectual legacy of his readings. The result is an image of the continent that intertwines lived experience with textual tradition, blending the real and the imagined in ways that catered to the sensibilities of a courtly audience.⁶ This dual approach,

³ See F. Gómez Redondo, *Historia de la prosa de los Reyes Católicos: el umbral del Renacimiento I*, Madrid 2012, pp. 252-256.

⁴ "La siguiente corónica, ilustrísima princesa, es partida en quatro partes principales. La primera trata de la cosmografía, división o partimiento de las tres partes en que los sabios antiguos el mundo partieron y de las regiones y provincias que en cada una d'ellas ay; es a saber: Asia, África, Europa", C. Moya García, *Edición...*, p. 3.

⁵ See *ibidem*, pp. LXXXIII-CVII.

⁶ It has been noted in this regard that Diego de Valera's chronicle signals a new form of authority that competes with that of the classics, such that the weight of tradition and established authorities prevails, legitimising the inclusion of marvellous elements in the chronicle. At the same time, however, the author emerges as an authority that rivals the classical model

characteristic of late medieval historiography, fulfilled a dual purpose. On the one hand, it sought to project a credible representation of places, peoples, and natural phenomena, often enhanced by the marvels and wonders expected in courtly narratives. On the other hand, it adhered to long-standing traditions inherited from biblical texts and the writings of Late Antiquity, which continued to shape the medieval worldview. It is within these inherited traditions, and their enduring influence on late medieval Castilian historiography as a whole, that this study will centre its focus, examining how such frameworks were adapted and perpetuated in the broader context of historical writing during this period. To this end, we will analyse a contemporary text, unpublished and mistakenly attributed, which offers a clear example of the way in which this heritage was shaped and preserved within the historiographical tradition of the time.

LATE ANTIQUITY HISTORIOGRAPHY AND ITS MEDIEVAL INHERITANCE

As Gautier-Dalché previously pointed out, since the 18th century, medieval texts containing geographical descriptions have been studied with an emphasis on the symbolic and imaginary aspects of their worldviews, while medieval authors were criticised as *géographes de cabinet* for merely copying texts from Antiquity and their refusal to observe the world around them. Taking a different perspective, the scholar observed that the continuity of spatial representations inherited from the past does not imply that they were not progressively modified and adjusted.⁷ In the same vein, Alfred Hiatt has noted that medieval cartographers did not merely reproduce ancient knowledge; rather, they reinterpreted and adapted it to their contemporary contexts, and this process of ‘dislocation’ allowed medieval geographical representations to be both creative and dynamic, reflecting political, social, and linguistic changes.⁸ Still, this process of integrating new geographical knowledge was quite slow and, by the 15th century, it was still clear that, neither the data from Arabic texts translated since the 12th century, nor the information brought by travellers, had been fully absorbed. Furthermore, and perhaps more importantly, the spread of the Latin translation

on an equal footing. In this sense, this section of the chronicle, where Valera himself recounts the places he has visited, functions much like the travel narratives of the Middle Ages, characterised by their gradual transition towards a depiction of space more closely aligned with reality. See L. Albuquerque-García, ‘*Relatos de viaje*’ y *paradigmas culturales*, “*Letras*” 71 (2015), pp. 63-76 [open access: <https://digital.csic.es/handle/10261/193072>], p. 67.

⁷ P. Gautier-Dalché, *Un problème d’histoire culturelle : perception et représentation de l’espace au Moyen Age*, “*Médiévales*” 18 (1990), pp. 5-15 [open access: <https://doi.org/10.3406/medi.1990.1164>].

⁸ A. Hiatt, *Dislocations: Maps, Classical Tradition, and Spatial Play in the European Middle Ages*, Toronto 2020.

of Ptolemy's work, undertaken at the beginning of the century, along with the cartography emerging from Iberian explorations, had yet to be reflected in the world descriptions found in historiographical texts.⁹ One could almost say that it took the emergence of the American continent in the minds of Europeans for the classical world maps to disappear.

Let us turn back to *La Valeriana* to explore this point. In its description of Europe, the text states the following:

Europe begins at the Riphean-Meotian Mountains, which descend to the east; to the west, along the northern shores of the Ocean Sea, reaching as far as Belgic Gaul and the river called the Rhine, which is also referred to by others as the Reno, flowing to the ocean, and then to the Danube, also known as the Ister, which lies to the south, as stated by Orosius in his fourth book. Isidore, in the fifteenth book of the *Etymologies*, states that Europe begins at the river called the Tanais, descending westward along the northern ocean to the edge of Spain, whose eastern and southern part, beginning at the Pontus, joins the Greater Sea and ends at the island of Gades, commonly called Cadiz. Europe comprises many kingdoms, regions, provinces, and nations, among which I shall only write about those of which we have little knowledge and where some marvellous things are to be found; John Teutonicus, in his *General History*, divides it into five parts, namely: Germania, which is also called Germany; Greece; Italy; France; and Spain.¹⁰

In this passage, Diego de Valera refers, as can be seen, to three sources: the 5th century historian Paulus Orosius, Isidore of Seville, and a certain John Teutonicus, from whose work he likely took not only the information but also the structure.¹¹ Regardless of how this section of the text was constructed and organised, it fits into a broader framework that situates Europe as the third part of a world originating from the second creation, following

9 S. Philips, *The Medieval Expansion of Europe*, Oxford 1998.

10 "Europa comienza de los montes Rifeos Meotidos, que son al oriente descendientes; al poniente, por las riberas setentrionales del mar océano fasta la Galia Bélgica y al río llamado Rin, que por otros se llama Reno, que es al océano, y dende al río Dinubio, que Istro también se llama, que es al mediodía, segund dize Orosio en el quarto libro suyo. Isidoro, en el quinzeno de las *Etimologías*, dize que Europa comiënça desd'el río llamado Tanay, decendiendo al poniente por el setentrional océano fasta el fin de España, cuya parte oriental y merediana, començando desd'el Ponto, al Mayor mar se conjunta y en la isla de Gades, que Calez comúnmente llamamos, se fenece. Europa contiene muchos reinos, regiones, provincias y naciones, de las quales solamente escriviré aquellas de que menos noticia avemos y en que algunas cosas maravillosas se fallan; de que Juan Teotónico, en su *General istoria*, faze cinco partes, es a saber: Germania, que Alemania se llama; Grecia; Italia; Francia; España.", C. Moya García, *Edición...*, p. 54.

11 Ibidem, p. LXXXVIII. The editor points out in the introduction that it is unknown which text this refers to.

the Flood. This world was populated according to a tripartite division of ethnicities, each corresponding to one of Noah's three sons.¹² Referring to all the medieval Castilian texts from the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries that echoed this biblical narrative would require far more pages than this article intends to occupy.¹³ Our focus here is on highlighting that most historiographical works, including Valera's, and reproduce a framework that was consolidated in the 13th century and transmitted over the next two centuries.¹⁴ This framework placed Iberian history in a universal context, both temporally and spatially, by portraying Tubal, son of Japheth and grandson of Noah, as the first settler of the Iberian Peninsula and, consequently, the earliest ancestor of its inhabitants. The cornerstone of this conception of history lies in the *Estoria de España*, King Alphonse X's monumental project to chronicle the Iberian past, whose opening lines clearly state its purpose:

And therefore, We, Alphonse... ordered the gathering of as many books of histories as we could find that recounted anything about the deeds of Spain, ... and we compiled this book with all the deeds that could be found about it, from the time of Noah to our own.¹⁵

The *Estoria de España* narrates the territorial evolution of the Iberian Peninsula until the reign of Ferdinand III of Castile, Alphonse's father. The text portrays the region as a land that witnessed the passage of various peoples in Antiquity and recounts the formation of diverse entities over the course of the medieval centuries. In essence, it describes how, throughout Late Antiquity, the structure imposed by Rome disintegrated and, after a period during which various Germanic peoples traversed the Iberian space, the Visigothic monarchy ultimately established its dominance over the entire peninsular territory. This was followed, starting in the 8th century, by Arab rule, which extended over almost the entire Peninsula, with a lesser presence in the north. Due

¹² See B. Braude, *The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods*, "The William and Mary Quarterly" 54 (1997), 1, pp. 103-142 [open access: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2953314>].

¹³ See A. Biglieri, *Las ideas geográficas y la imagen del mundo en la literatura española medieval*, Madrid 2012, pp. 58-77.

¹⁴ Later, at the beginning of the second part of the *Abreviada*, Valera will state that 'seven sons of Japheth, the youngest son of Noah, inherited all of Europe' (siete hijos de Jafed, fijo menor de Noé, heredaran toda Europa) adding that 'Tubal, his fourth son, inherited the lands of Spain' ('Túbál, quarto fijo suyo, heredó las Españas'). C. Moya García, *Edición...*, p. 74.

¹⁵ "E por end, Nos don Alfonso... mandamos ayuntar quantos libros pudimos auer de istorias en que alguna cosa contassen de los fechos d'Espanna, ... et compusiemus este libro de todos los fechos que fallar se pudieron della desde el tiempo de Noe fasta este nuestro". Quoted from D. Catalán, *La Estoria de España de Alfonso X. Creación y evolución*, Madrid 1992, p. 28.

to the persistence of local powers and the emergence of centres of resistance, the Kingdom of Asturias arose in the first half of the 8th century. This small mountainous territory expanded in the following two centuries. In the 10th century, it became the Kingdom of León, and simultaneously, the County and later Kingdom of Castile emerged. Throughout the 10th, 11th, and 12th centuries, new territories appeared and borders fluctuated. There was also a relatively constant dynamic of territorial expansion under Christian rule in a north-south direction. The Kingdoms of Portugal, Navarre, and Aragon came into existence, and by the second half of the 13th century, the Castilian kings, having inherited a large portion of the territory and conquered key cities such as Córdoba and Seville, controlled much of the Peninsula.

Among the many texts directly or indirectly derived from the *Estoria*, the one that had the greatest impact on 15th-century Castilian historiography was the translation of the Portuguese *Crónica de Geral Espanha de 1344* (*General Chronicle of Spain of 1344*), written by Count Pedro de Barcelos.¹⁶ It served as one of the sources for the aforementioned *Valeriana* and provided the basis for the writing we will analyse: a summary or synthesis of Castilian history which, like many others from that century, relied on earlier works as a foundation and extended the narrative to include the present, or very recent, events.¹⁷ The choice of this text is based not only on our long-standing engagement, as it has been the focus of our research for several years and is now being prepared for publication, but also on its value as a compelling example of the worldview and conception of Europe that characterised much of the historiography of the period.

THE MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

The codex preserved in the library of the Monastery of El Escorial under reference number h-II-22 dates from the latter half of the 15th century and

16 According to Diego Catalán, "It is evident that the *Crónica Geral de Espanha* by Count Pedro de Barcelos imitates and closely follows the general chronicles of Spain derived from Alfonso X's *Estoria de España*, and that its author can be described, in the words of Cintra, as 'a faithful disciple of the compilatory methods of the Castilian school of the late 13th century'" ("Es evidente que la *Crónica Geral de Espanha* del Conde don Pedro de Barcelos imita y sigue de cerca a las crónicas generales de España derivadas de la *Estoria de España* de Alfonso X, y que su autor puede ser calificado, según frase de Cintra, como 'um discípulo fiel dos processos compilatórios da escola castelhana de fins do século XIII'"). D. Catalán and M.S. Andrés, *Crónica de 1344 que ordenó el Conde de Barcelos don Pedro Alfonso*, Madrid 1971, p. xxix; L.F.L. Cintra, *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*, Lisboa 1951, p. CDXVI. See also R. Menéndez Pidal, *La leyenda de los infantes de Lara*, Madrid 1896, p. 60.

17 J.P. Jardin, *El modelo alfonsí ante la revolución trastámara: los sumarios de crónicas generales del siglo XV*, in: *La historia alfonsí: el modelo y sus destinos (siglos XIII-XV)*, ed. G. Martin, Madrid 2000, pp. 141-156 [open access: <https://books.openedition.org/cvz/2183>].

gathers a series of historiographical texts, several of which were penned by members of the Santa María family - a prominent ecclesiastical lineage of converso origin that wielded considerable influence at the Castilian royal court in the early 15th century.¹⁸ The first of these texts, *The Seven Ages of the World*, is a historiographical account in verse attributed to Pablo García de Santa María, a former rabbi who converted to Christianity in the late 14th century. He later rose to become the Bishop of Burgos and, subsequently, tutor to the future John II of Castile.¹⁹ The composition of this work seems to be tied to the education of the young prince. As we know, in the Middle Ages memory played a crucial role in education, and probably *The Seven Ages* was written in verse to facilitate memorization, providing a succinct summary of historical events that other works addressed in far greater detail. The title of the text and its structure are rooted in the division of time outlined by St. Augustine, a framework that found expression in numerous medieval Iberian texts. The account of the Seven Ages - strictly speaking, six, as the seventh was understood to begin after the end of the world - draws heavily on biblical sources.²⁰

The narrative opens with the Creation, signalling the start of the First Age, while the Second Age commences with the Great Flood. As in the biblical account, it is noted that only Noah and his family survived, from whom, it is inferred, all of humanity is descended:²¹

Those who were saved from such a loss
were no more, of all nations,
than four women and four men,
and from them descend the many who exist today.

¹⁸ From this point onwards, references to texts and manuscripts will include, in addition to the shelf marks of the corresponding libraries and, where applicable, the editions, their entries in the Philobiblon database (<https://philobiblon.upf.edu/html/>). In this case, Philobiblon BETA manid 1548.

¹⁹ See L. Serrano, *Los conversos D. Pablo de Santa María y D. Alfonso de Cartagena*, Madrid 1942; F. Cantera Burgos, *Alvar García de Santa María y su familia de conversos*, Madrid 1952; and L. Fernández Gallardo, *La obra historiográfica de dos conversos ilustres, don Pablo de Santa María y don Alonso de Cartagena*, "Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie III. Historia Medieval" 6 (1993), pp. 249-286, among others.

²⁰ A study and edition of this work in: J.C. Conde, *La creación de un discurso historiográfico en el cuatrocientos castellano: 'Las siete edades del mundo' de Pablo de Santa María (Estudio y Edición crítica)*, Salamanca 1999. See also idem, *Pablo de Santa María. Las siete edades del mundo*, in: *Diccionario filológico de literatura medieval española*, ed. Carlos Alvar, José Manuel Lucía Megías, Madrid 2002, pp. 858-864.

²¹ "Los que guaresçieron desta perdiçion | non fueron mas de todas generaçiones | de quatro mugeres y quatro varones | y dende desçienden quantos oy son | e fueles alli dada grant benediçion | de nuestro señor por que señoreasen | a todas las cosas e multiplicasen | por via derecha de generaçion" (fol. 8v).

There they were given a great blessing
 from Our Lord, that they should rule
 over all things and multiply
 by the rightful path of generation

According to the text, the youngest son of Noah, Japheth, is the ancestor of the Christians, which are identified with Europeans, *i.e.*, Greeks, Romans, Hispanics, Angles, and Gauls, as well as the inhabitants of other kingdoms that are not mentioned.²²

Of the youngest son of these three brothers
 were born Gomer, Magog, and Tubal,
 (along with other sons, of whom I remain silent),
 from whom later descended the noble Christians,
 as well as the Greeks and Romans,
 and others from many nearby provinces,
 Hispanics, Angles and Gauls
 with all the other bordering kingdoms.²³

This manuscript (Escorial h-II-22) does not include the section of the work that discusses how the Iberian Peninsula was populated, where Tubal is referenced.

This was Japheth, called the youngest,
 who, in the division made thereafter,
 was the first settler of this latter part
 with his lineage, which he did impart.
 He had seven sons, and from the eldest
 came those of Galatia, as is confessed,
 while from the others, many peoples spread,
 populating all the lands around instead.
 Of these seven men mentioned above,
 the fifth was called Tubal,
 a son of Japheth, from whom, after all,
 came the Spaniards, born of his line, thereof.

22 “Del fijo menor de aquestos tres hermanos | nasçieron Gomet e Magot e Tubal | sin otros fijos que no cuento del qual | despues desçendieron todos los lindos christianos | asy como fueron los griegos e romanos | e otros de muchas prouinçias çercanas | espanicas anglicas e galicanas | con todos los otros regnos comarcanos” (fol. 9r).

23 “Del fijo menor de aquestos tres hermanos | nasçieron Gomet e Magot e Tubal | sin otros fijos que no cuento del qual | despues desçendieron todos los lindos christianos | asy como fueron los griegos e romanos | e otros de muchas prouinçias çercanas | espanicas anglicas e galicanas | con todos los otros regnos comarcanos” (fol. 9r).

When in Babylon, through confusion's strife,
the remnants of lineages left alive
came to these regions, where they dispersed
and from which various nations emerged.²⁴

In parallel, in two of the copies of *The Seven Ages of the World* the stanzas were supplemented with prose glosses, and there we can read commentaries that amplify the information about the sons of Japheth.

Japheth's sons were seven: Gomer, from whom descended the people of Galatia; the second, Magog, from whom came the Scythians, the Goths, and the barbarian nations; Maday, from whom came the Medes; Javan, from whom descended the Ionians, who are called the Greeks; another was Tubal, from whom came the Spanish; and Meshech, from whom descended the people of Cappadocia; and Tiras, from whom came the people of Thrace, where Constantinople and Macedonia, the region of Alexander the Great, are located.²⁵

All these quotes reflect the weight of the image of a world divided into three parts - rather than three continents - since the Flood; an image that was complemented by the idea of three ethnicities, each corresponding to one of the three religions to a greater or lesser extent, and by the conception that different lineages settled in different regions. Pablo de Santa María thus constructed an image of Europe defined by religion and ethnicity, grounded in a genealogical framework with biblical references. This portrayal was not novel, as it perpetuated ideas that had been reproduced since Late Antiquity, as we have seen. Moreover, it was entirely fitting to incorporate this narrative into a work structured around a temporal division originating from that same era.

24 "Este fue Jafed que dezimos menor | qual en la partiçion que se hiziera | desta sobre dicha parte postrimera | con su linaje fue el primer poblador | y ovo siete hijos con el mayor | del qual aquellos de Galaçia vinieron | y de los otros muchas gentes que fueron | poblando la tierra toda enderredor | D'aquestos siete sobre dichos varones | Tubal el quinto dellos fue llamado Tubal | hijo de Jafed el terçero del qual | vinieron despues todos los españoles | quando en Babilonia por las confusiones | que de los linajes quedaron naçidas | ouieron venido en aquestas partidas | donde proçedieron diuersas naciones". J.C. Conde, '*Las siete edades del mundo*' de Pablo de Santa María. *Refundición de 1460*, "Revista Lemir" 1 (1996-7) [open access: <http://parnaseo.uv.es/Lemir/Textos/Conde/Index.p.html>].

25 "Los fijos de Jafed fueron siete Gomer de quien deçendieron los de Galaçia el segundo Magod de quiendeçendieron los sçitas y los godos y las barbaras naçiones Maday de quien vinieron los de Media Yluan del qual deçendieron los Ionios los quales son dichos griegos el otro fue Tubal de quien vinieron los españoles y Mosoch de quien vinieron los de Capadoçia y Tiras do vinieron los de Traçia donde es Costantinopla y Maçedonia rregion que fue de Alixandre el Magno", J.C. Conde, '*Las siete ...*', p. 21.

Escorial h-II-22 contains a total of twelve texts. Following *The Seven Ages* is a Spanish translation of the Latin version of a work by Lucian of Samosata, and from folio 52r onwards there is a writing titled *Suma de las corónicas de España*, which has traditionally been attributed to Pablo de Santa María. Most of the other works are related to Pablo's son, Alonso de Cartagena, who also pursued an ecclesiastical career and was an outstanding intellectual. There is also a text, *Compilación de las batallas campales*, written by another individual connected to this family, not by blood ties but through ecclesiastical and intellectual associations: Diego Rodríguez de Almela. Through Alonso de Cartagena's influence, Almela gained access to the royal court and became chaplain to Queen Isabella the Catholic, whom he accompanied during her campaign against Granada in 1491. He died then or shortly afterward, but before that he wrote several historiographical texts, to which he repeatedly returned, rewriting or reusing parts of some to compose others.²⁶ His main goal seems to have been to complete the *Compendio historial*, a history of Castile that has been transmitted in an unfinished state.²⁷

Prior to its arrival at the library of El Escorial, the codex h-II-22 was housed in the Royal Chapel of Granada, and it is not unlikely that it was deposited there by Queen Isabella, who may have received it as a gift from Almela himself. If this hypothesis were confirmed, it would support a thesis put forward by Jean-Pierre Jardin, which we endorse: that the *Suma* was written by Diego Rodríguez de Almela, based on the same materials he would later use for the *Compendio*.²⁸ The analysis of other testimonies of this work, which we will discuss below, reinforces this theory. One of them was copied in the Monastery of San Salvador de Oña, it is now held at the Library of the Lázaro Galdiano Foundation, and it may be a reworking. The other three provide quite interesting clues about the possible composition process of the work.

THE *SUMA DE LAS CORÓNICAS DE ESPAÑA*

The *Suma de las corónicas de España* synthesises the history of the Crown of Castile, beginning with the time of the Flood and concluding in the 15th

²⁶ See M.J. Lacarra, *La reescritura de los milagros de Santiago a fines del siglo XV: el caso de Diego Rodríguez de Almela*, in: *Formas breves en la Edad Media*, ed. E. Fidalgo, Santiago de Compostela 2005, pp. 11-33; S.G. Armistead, *La interpolación del 'Compendio' de Diego Rodríguez de Almela*, in: *La tradición épica de las Mocidades de Rodrigo*, Salamanca 2000, pp. 91-119; and J.P. Jardin, *Las estrategias para textuales en las crónicas del siglo XV*, in: *Paratextos en la literatura española (siglos XV-XVIII)*, ed. S. Arredondo Sirodey, P. Civil, M. Moner, Madrid 2009, pp. 267-282.

²⁷ C. Armenteros Lizana, *El compendio historial de Diego Rodríguez de Almela*, Murcia 1995. See also F. Gómez Redondo, *Historia...*, pp. 196-202.

²⁸ J.P. Jardin, *Le règne de Jean II vu depuis Murcie*, "Melanges de la Casa de Velázquez" 30 (1994), 1, pp. 207-225.

century. As previously noted, the text has survived in five manuscripts, each with similar headings but differing endings. Three of these manuscripts make no reference to the author, while the fourth attributes both the composition and the physical production to Alonso de Madrid, a monk and abbot at the Monastery of San Salvador de Oña.²⁹ The fifth manuscript - Biblioteca Nacional de España 1279 (BNE 1279) - connects the authorship to both Pablo García de Santa María, Bishop of Burgos, and Fernán Martínez de Burgos, a scribe from the same city.³⁰ Based on this last testimony - a 17th century copy of a manuscript from the second half of the 15th century - most scholars have accepted the hypothesis that, around 1420, Pablo de Santa María (c. 1350-1435) wrote a historical synthesis, probably intended for the education of King John II - much like *The Siete Edades* - which his son, Alonso de Cartagena (1381-1456), later expanded by narrating the subsequent four decades, before being copied by Fernán Martínez de Burgos.³¹ In a previous study we deconstructed this idea, and therefore refer to it for further details, building upon its conclusions.³²

The 'base text' of the *Suma* has been transmitted in three of the preserved testimonies: the manuscript under call number 10448 of the Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE 10448),³³ the 595 from the Foulché-Delbosc collection at the Biblioteca Nacional Argentina (BNA 595),³⁴ and the aforementioned BNE 1279. The first two testimonies end at the beginning of the reign of Henry IV, with the phrase: "all the great ones of his kingdom and the citizens were kissing his hands with great joy, and he was very willingly giving them all his blessing".³⁵ They also include a text unrelated

29 Fundación Lázaro Galdiano, Inv. 15281 Ms. 634. Philobiblon BETA manid 1939. Descriptions of this codex in: M. Zabalza Duque, 'Sepultus est'. Oña y León. La tumba del rey Sancho III el Mayor, in: *Recuerdos literarios en honor a un gran historiador de Castilla: Gonzalo Martínez Díez (1924-2015)*, ed. I. Ruiz Rodríguez, F. Martínez Llorente, Madrid 2016, pp. 401-417; F. Villaseñor Sebastián, *El libro iluminado en Castilla durante la segunda mitad del siglo XV*, Segovia 2009, pp. 290-292; J.A. Yeves Andrés, *La estética del libro español: manuscritos e impresos españoles hasta finales del siglo XVI en la Biblioteca Lázaro Galdiano*, Madrid 1997, pp. 116-118; and J.A. Yeves Andrés, *Manuscritos españoles de la Biblioteca Lázaro Galdiano*, Madrid 1998, pp. 275 and 276.

30 Philobiblon BETA manid 3888.

31 See C. Valdaliso Casanova, *Los autores de la Suma de crónicas de Pablo García de Santa María. Singularidad, transmisión y resiliencia en la historiografía bajomedieval*, "eHumanista. Journal of Iberian Studies – Conversos" 4 (2016), pp. 212-232 [open access: <http://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/conversos/volumes/4>].

32 C. Valdaliso Casanova, *Colegir y escribir de su mano. Las funciones de fray Alonso de Madrid, abad de Oña, en la 'Suma de las crónicas de España'*, in: *Avatares y perspectivas del medievalismo hispánico*, Logroño 2019, pp. 281-295.

33 Philobiblon BETA manid 4893.

34 Philobiblon BETA manid 1696.

35 "Todos los grandes de su reyno e çibdadanos fueron besar las manos con mucha alegría, e el reçebiendo a todos muy con buena voluntad" (BNA 595, fol. 44v).

to the *Suma*: the *pregón de la condena de Álvaro de Luna*.³⁶ The third testimony differs from the previous two primarily in that it concludes with the death of Queen Catherine of Lancaster. It is likely an incomplete copy of a lost manuscript, transcribed by Fernán Martínez de Burgos in 1461. The interruption in the copy, which attributes the text's authorship to Pablo García de Santa María, suggests that the work was halted under the assumption that the bishop had reached that point, leaving the remainder to be completed by continuators.

By considering the *Suma* in this way and analysing its final section, it becomes much easier to approach the present of its composition and, to a certain extent, its context. The former is partially revealed within the text itself, when it laments King John II's signing of truces with Granada:

And such war did the Christians wage against the Moors at that time, destroying their crops twice a year and raiding their lands every day, to such an extent that the Moors found themselves in great distress. For a long time, they had been left in peace and had not experienced war with the Christians. Indeed, ever since that good king Don Alfonso the Ninth, who won the great battle of Tarifa and died near Gibraltar over a hundred years ago, they had not been engaged in any war, except for a short time under King Pedro when he killed the 'Red King', and later when Prince Don Fernando marched against Setenil and Antequera. And now, over the course of those hundred years, war against the Moors has not lasted fifteen full years. And even with this brief period during which our lord the king waged war against them, the Moors were brought to such great misery that there were no more than a thousand knights left in the Kingdom of Granada, and even those were poor and ill-prepared, for they had nothing to eat and no hope of relief. Had the war lasted another five or six years, the entire Kingdom of Granada would have been lost, and the Christians would have reclaimed it. But the Devil, who never ceases to bring about evil, caused such discord between the king and the knights when the adelantado Pero Manrique was captured and released, that they all united against the king, and for

36 Philobiblon BETA texid 3259. The *pregón de la condena de Álvaro de Luna* is a public proclamation detailing the charges against Álvaro de Luna, a prominent Castilian nobleman and royal favourite, and the sentence imposed upon him. Álvaro de Luna (c. 1390-1453) was a Constable of Castile and the chief minister of King John II. For much of his career, he wielded significant power at court, influencing key political decisions and accumulating considerable wealth and titles. His dominance provoked resentment among the nobility and even within the royal family. After John II fell under the influence of other factions, particularly that of his second wife, Queen Isabella of Portugal, Álvaro de Luna's position weakened. Accused of corruption, tyranny, and the mismanagement of royal finances, he was arrested, tried, and ultimately condemned. In 1453, he was executed by beheading in Valladolid.

this reason the truces with Granada were made. This discord became the salvation and life of the Moors.³⁷

This passage situates the work in the final years of John II's reign and highlights the importance the compiler attributed to events related to the frontier with Granada. However, it is the following passage that allows us to determine the author's "present" more precisely, as it states that "in less than three years, two major battles have been lost due to our sins" - one of them the Battle of Río Verde in 1448 - and refers to the capture of Cieza, also in that year, thereby situating the text around 1450:³⁸

And since this gathering, many others have occurred, such as the entry into Medina, the gathering at the field, the fight at Pampliega, the battle of Olmedo, and many others; imprisonments and exiles, such as the imprisonment at Tordesillas; uprisings of cities, such as Toledo and Murcia, and other towns and castles, which have led to and continue to lead to great wars in the kingdom, such as Atienza, Peña de Alcaraz, and Torija; Rodrigo Manrique and Alfonso Fajardo with the castles and towns they hold in the Maestrazgo and the Kingdom of Murcia. [...] And every day the Moors raid and devastate all the land on the Christian frontier, for it is said with certainty that in less than three years, seven or eight thousand Christian men and women have been taken captive to Moorish lands, with almost as many killed.³⁹

37 "E tal guerra fizieron los cristianos a los moros en este tienpo, talando los panes dos vezes en cada año e correrles la tierra de cada dia, de guisa que los moros se vieron en muy grant afrenta; como quier que auia mucho tienpo que estauan olgados e non auian aujdo guerra con cristianos. Ca, despues que aquel buen rey don Alonso Nueue, que vençio la grant batalla de Tarifa e murio sobre Gibraltar, que ha bien çient años o mas, nunca les fue fecha guerra saluo vn poco de tienpo, el rey don Pedro quando mato al rey Bermejo, e despues quando el infante don Fernando fue sobre Setenjl e Antequera. E agora esta de guisa que en todos los çient años non se ha hecho guerra a los moros qujnze años cunplidos. E avn con este poco de tienpo que el rey nuestro señor les fizo esta guerra fueron los moros en tan grant cuyta que vino a ser que en todo el reyno de Granada no auja mjl caualleros, e avn esos non buenos; ca non tenjan en el mundo que comer nin esperauan ser socorridos. E sy la guerra durara otros çinco o seys años mas, todo el reyno de Granada fuera perdido e lo cobraran los cristianos. Mas el diablo, que no çesa de fazer sienpre todo mal, puso tal discordia entre el rey e los caualleros quando fue preso e suelto el adelantado Pero Manrique, que se ayuntaron todos contra el rey e por esta causa se fizieron las treguas con Granada; la qual discordia fue salud e vida para los moros" (BNA 595, fol. 42).

38 "En menos de non tres años han vençido por nuestros pecados dos peleas gruesas" (BNA 595, fol. 42).

39 "E despues deste ayuntamiento se han fecho otros muchos, asi como la entrada de Medina, e ayuntamiento del Canpo, e pelea de Panpliega, e batalla de Olmedo, e otros muchos; e prisiones e destierros, asi commo la prision de Tordesillas; e leuuntamiento de çibdades, asi como Toledo e Murçia, e otras villas e castillos, de que se ha hecho e faze grant guerra en el reyno; asi como Atiença e Peña de Alcaçar e Torija; e Rodrigo Manrique e Alfonso Fajardo de los castillos

In both BNE 10448 and BNA 595, the narrative continues with what appear to be later additions: mentions of the marriages and offspring of John II, references to the king's death, a backward leap in time to recount the dramatic end of Álvaro de Luna, a more detailed description of the monarch's passing, a record of the beginning of Henry IV's reign, and the aforementioned transcription of the *pregón*. This sequence of endings suggests at least three distinct moments when the narrative was intended to be concluded: the first around 1450, the second - adding a paragraph that closed John II's reign - necessarily after 1454, and the third, likely close to the second, introducing a text that, before recording Henry IV's accession, underscored the negative role that, from the compiler's perspective, Constable Álvaro de Luna had played.

From this, we can infer that the *Suma* was drafted around 1450, expanded over the following five years, and copied by the scribe Fernán Martínez de Burgos in 1461. Two or three decades later, a monk from San Salvador de Oña updated the text, altering verb tenses, removing some references to the present, and adding a paragraph summarising Henry IV's reign. Around the same time, another update was copied into the manuscript now housed in the El Escorial codex. Meanwhile, the text was transcribed at least twice more, corresponding to the BNE 10448 and BNA 595 testimonies, in the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

EUROPE IN THE *SUMA DE LAS CORÓNICAS*

The *Suma de las corónicas* is a remarkable example of the way Castilian historiography was transmitted during the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries. In addition to being a reflection of the processes of progressive composition and rewriting, as we have just seen, the *Suma* is a prime example of how a historical geography, based both on the Bible and other texts, was constructed and transmitted in the late medieval period. The text discusses the division of the lands of the world into three main parts: Asia, which is the largest; Africa; and Europe. The reasons these names were assigned to the continents can be found, according to the text, in the work of Saint Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*. The narrative then shifts to the story of the Tower of Babel. At this point, there seems to be some confusion, or perhaps a leap, since the Flood is not mentioned before discussing Noah's sons. The text states that, after the construction of the tower, God intervened by confusing the builders' language, making it impossible for them to understand one another. This

e villas que tienen en el maestradgo e reyno de Murçia. [...] [fol. 43r] E de cada dia corren los moros e astragan toda la tierra de la frontera de los cristianos; ca se dize por cierto auer leuados en menos destos tres años siete o ocho mil omes e mujeres cristianos cabtios a tierra de moros, e al pie de otros tantos muertos" (BNA 595, fols. 42-43).

linguistic confusion, as the narrative recounts, led not only to a division in language but also to a division in their desires. Consequently, the people abandoned their project and scattered across the globe in search of new lands to inhabit. Here is where the leap appears, as the text transitions to how Noah's descendants populated the Earth. It tells us that among them, the descendants of Shem, the eldest son of Noah, inherited Asia. Meanwhile, Ham's descendants took possession of Africa, and Japheth, the youngest son, inherited Europe. It also notes that the sons of Japheth began settling in various regions, including Amano and Toro, two mountains located in Sicily. They also made their way to Lesser Syria, which is part of Asia, while some of Shem's descendants spread throughout Europe.

To better illustrate what we are referring to, we present here a translation:

Those who wrote about the division of the lands of the inhabited world divided all the Earth into three parts. The first and largest was named Asia. The second, Africa. And the third, Europe. These names were given to each of these lands for specific reasons, according to Saint Isidore in his *Etymologies*. You have already heard in other books about Asia and Africa, how they are and what they are like, but we will speak here briefly about the third part, which is Europe, because it pertains to the history of Spain.

It is important to know, as the authors of histories say, that after those who were building the tower of arrogance in Babylon, whose evil intentions were destroyed by God, were confused in their language to such a degree that they could no longer understand one another. They were not only divided in language but also in will. And for this reason, they abandoned the work they were doing, so that they no longer wished to live together and dispersed across the world, seeking lands where the descendants of Shem, who was the eldest of Noah's three sons, might dwell. These, who had escaped in the ark from the great flood, along with their wives and their father Noah, inherited Asia; but not all of them. The sons of Ham inherited Africa; while the sons of Japheth, the youngest brother, inherited Europe.⁴⁰

40 "Los que escriuieron el departimiento de las tierras del mundo vniuersal fizieron de toda la tierra que se puede morar tres partes. La primera y mayor pusieron nonbre Asia. E la segunda Africa. E a la terçera Europa. Estos nonbres fueron puestos a cada vna destas tierras por çiertas causas e razones segunt sant Ysidro en las Ethimologias las pone. De Asia e de Africa ya auedes oydo dezir en otros libros de que manera e que tales son, mas de la terçera parte, que es Europa, se seblará aqui algunt tanto, porque atañe a la historia de España. Onde es de saber, segunt dizen los actores de las ystorias, que despues que fueron desacordados aquellos que asi fazian aquella torre de soberuia en Bauilonia, a quien Dios destruyo las sus malas jntençiones, confondiolos en el lenguaje de tal guisa que se non entendian los vnos con los otros. E no tan

The last part of this first fragment describes Europe. According to the text, Europe stretches from the great sea, referred to as Oceanus, to the Mediterranean Sea, which serves as a boundary between Europe and Africa, and ends at a cape in Spain, in a location called Cádiz, also known as the Isle of Hercules, where the Mediterranean and the Ocean meet.

They began to settle Amano and Toro, which are two mountains in the land of Sicily, and also settled in Lesser Syria, which belongs to Asia. With these sons of Japheth, part of the descendants of Shem inherited all of Europe, from the great sea, called in Greek *Oceanus*, to the other sea, called the Mediterranean, because it runs through the middle of the earth and divides Europe and Africa. Europe ends at a cape in Spain in a place called Cadiz, also known as the Island of Hercules. In this island, the two seas mentioned come together.⁴¹

As we continue reading, we find a more detailed description of Europe. The text notes that there are thirty provinces in Europe, as designated by Saint Isidore in the twelfth book of his *Etymologies*. These provinces include Esthia Inferior, Germany, Dacia, Germana, Pannonia, Thrace, and many others. Beyond these provinces, the text highlights numerous islands, such as England, which was formerly called Great Britain, and Ibernica, known as Ireland, as well as Istancia (Scotland), Istria, and another island called Cibe. All these islands are situated on the western side, some facing west and others east. Additionally, there are smaller islands that belong to Europe, lying in the Mediterranean Sea. The text also details that these islands begin on the western side and includes names like Mallorca, Menorca, Nice, Formentera, Corsica, Sardinia, and others. Finally, the narrative mentions the inheritance of these lands by the seven sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magot, Maday, Yban, Tubal, Mereche, and Tiras. It explains that from Gomer

solamente fueron departidos en la lengua, mas avn en las voluntades. E por esta razon dexaron aquella lauor que fazian de guisa que non quisieron morar vnos con otros e esparzieronse por el mundo buscando tierras en que biuiesen los hijos de Sem, que fue el mayor de los tres hermanos hijos de Noe. Los quales ouieron escapado ante de la hedificacion e confusion de Bauilonia en el arca del grant deluuio con sus mugeres e padre Noe, heredaron a Asia; mas non todos. E los fijos de Cam heredaron a Africa; mas los fijos de Jafed, el menor hermano, ouieron por su parte Europa" (BNA 595, fol. 2r).

41 "E començaron de poblar Amano e Toro, que son dos montes en tierra de Seçilia. Poble otrosi en Siria la menor, que perteneçe a Asia. Con estos fijos de Jafet, heredaron parte de los fijos de Sem de buelta toda Europa, del grant mar que en griego es llamado Oçeano fasta el otro mar que es llamado Mediterraneo, porque va por medio de la tierra e faze departimjento entre Europa e Africa. E acabase Europa en vn cabo de España en vn logar que llaman Cadiz e por sobre nonbre Ysla de Hercoles. En esta ysla se ayuntan estos dos mares que dichos son" (BNA 595, fol. 2r).

came the inhabitants of Galicia, which is why it was called Galostia, while Tubal's descendants became the Spanish. From Magot, as Saint Isidore notes, emerged the Scythians, Goths, Vandals, Suevi, and Alans, leading to diverse generations from each of Japheth's sons.

It is known that there are thirty provinces in Europe, as assigned by Saint Isidore in the twelfth book of *Etymologies*, which are as follows: Esthia Inferior, Germany, Dacia, Germana, Pamonia, Thrace, Ebeam, Greece, Dalmatia, Ephuries, Ella, Daus, Asia, Athens, Hellas, Lazio, Peloponnese, Thessaly, Macedonia, Patria, Alexandria, Athajan, Cornius, Arcadia, Aboston, Lapis, Macedonia, Istria, Italy, Turkey, Hungary, Rome, Tirtetania, Apulia, Campania, Galicia, Aquitania, Reuo and Rodouo, Loquis, Ciujtas, Dacia, and Spain.

Beyond these, there are many islands, such as England, which was formerly called Great Britain, and Ibernica, known as Ireland, and Istancia, Scotland, and Istria, and another island called Cibe. All these islands are on the western side, some facing west, others east. There are also minor islands in Europe, lying in the Mediterranean Sea. These begin in the western part, and in the eastern part, there are the Balearic Islands, Menorca, Nice, Formentera, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily, Malta, the city of Venice, Crete, Patmos, Corfu, and the archipelago with all the smaller islands that belong to Constantinople.

All these lands were inherited by the seven sons of Japheth, of whom the first was named Gomer, the second Magot, the third Maday, the fourth Yban, the fifth Tubal, the sixth Mereche, and the seventh Tiras. From Gomer, the first son, came those who populated Galicia. For this reason, it was called Galostia. From Tubal came the Spaniards. According to Saint Isidore in *Etymologies*, Magot's descendants included the Scythians, Goths, Vandals, Suevi, and Alans. Each of the sons of Japheth gave rise to various generations, which would be lengthy to recount.⁴²

42 "Onde es de ssaber que en Europa ay treynta prouinçias segunt que Sant Isidro en el xiiij^o libro de las Ethimologias las asigno, las quales son estas: Esthia Inferior, Alemania, Daçia, Germana, Pamjonia, Traçia, Ebeam, Greçia, Dalmaçia, Efarus, Ella, Daus, Aça, Athenas, Elladas, Boeçia, Peloponensis, Tesalia, Maçedonia, Patria, Alexandria, Ataran, Corintio, Arcadia, Aboston, Lapis, Maçedonia, Ystria, Ytalia, Tuçia, Vngria, Roma, Tirrenja, Apulia, Canpania, Galles, Equitania, Rouo et Rodono, Bochis, Ciuitas, Decia, Yspania. E allende destas ay muchas yslas, asi como Ynglaterra que antiguamente era llamada la Grant Bretaña, e Ybernica a la que llaman Yrlanda, e Ystancia e Escoçia e Ystisia e otra ysla que llaman Çibe. Todas estas yslas son de la parte de aguion, las vnas contra oçidente, e las otras contra oriente. E son de la parte de Europa yslas menores. Estas yazen en el mar Mediterraneo. E estas comiençan en la parte de oçidente. E en la parte de oriente de las quales es Mallorcas e Menorcas e Niça, la Formentora, Corçega, Çerdeña, Çeçilia, Mentillano, la çibdat de Veneçia, Corta, Petimus, Ponto, Corintion e el archipeligo con todas las yslas menores que yazen en perteinençia de Costantinopla. Todas estas tierras heredaron los siete fijos de Jafed, de los quales el primero ouo nonbre Gomer, e el ssegundo Magot, e el terçero Maday, e el quarto Yuan, e el quinto Tubal, e el sexto Meroen, e el

As can be seen, many of the names mentioned here are imprecise or inaccurate. This is partly due to the alterations the narrative underwent during its manuscript transmission, but it also likely reflects the author's lack of interest in accurately representing the locations referenced. That distant, biblical past was recounted in a deliberately vague and abstract manner. What mattered most was to demonstrate that, in doing so, the author was faithfully reproducing the writings of recognised authorities. Indeed, the *Suma de las corónicas* essentially compiles and summarises the works produced in previous centuries, particularly those of King Alphonse X.

CONCLUSIONS

It is notable that a text written and copied in the late 15th century, likely authored by someone who lived at the threshold of Europe's radical and permanent transformation in its worldview, reflects an inherited image shaped by a blend of biblical texts and writings from Classical and Late Antiquity. In a bookish culture, the authority of predecessors held primacy. Given that the world had changed little in its extent since Roman Antiquity, ancient models remained the foundation of medieval conceptual frameworks. The principal concern of Iberian chroniclers was to convey the idea that the inhabitants of ancient Hispania were descended from a grandson of Noah. This narrative reinforced a sense of unity and differentiation from others, aligning perfectly with the ideological and political interests of the Iberian monarchies. For medieval kings, it was essential to explain and justify their rule by invoking a specific and genealogical origin for the peoples inhabiting their domains. In the texts we have analysed, Iberia was portrayed as Christian from its very beginnings, even before the advent of Christ, and its history was to conform to the image crafted by the *auctoritas* of Late Antiquity.

This adherence to the writings of established authorities carried another significant consequence. Notably, the *Suma* does not reference Alphonse X's works, nor does it mention Almela's principal source, the Spanish version of the *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344*. Such omissions were not unusual in 15th century historiography. Rather than crediting the authors of the texts they reworked, historians often reiterated the names of the authorities cited in those sources. This reflects a characteristic feature of medieval historiography: a persistent reliance on references to established authors and texts, while anonymity remained widespread. The humility of the cleric who

seteno Tiraz. E de Gomer el primero hijo vinieron los que poblaron a Gallizia, e por esto fue llamado Galostia. E de Tubal vinieron los españoles. De Magot, segunt dize sant Ysidro en las Ethimologias, vinieron los çitas e los godos e vandalos e sueuos e alanos. E de cada vno de los hijos de Jafed salieron diuersas generaçiones, asi que seria luengo de contar" (BNA 595 fol. 2v).

refrains from signing his work, who confines himself to compiling existing writings to preserve and transmit them, persisted as a defining trait of historiography in the final decades of the medieval period.

The phenomenon creates the impression of a story endlessly retold, drawn from the same sources and continually referencing authoritative figures to validate its claims. The cyclical process of development and synthesis, like a mechanism with no clear endpoint, served a deliberate purpose. Through its repetition, the past was consolidated into an increasingly permanent construct, offering a stable foundation for the present. This enduring narrative framework not only legitimised contemporary rule but also bridged the present to an immutable, divinely ordained history, ensuring its relevance and resonance across generations.

ABSTRACT

This article examines why late medieval Castilian historiography failed to reflect a contemporary image of Europe informed by the voyages and geographical knowledge of the time, instead perpetuating an inherited vision shaped by biblical texts and the writings of Late Antiquity. Through the analysis of an unpublished 15th century *sumario*, whose authorship has been misattributed until recent years, the study explores how this text synthesises the history of Castile by condensing material from earlier works. The article argues that this historiographical approach, characteristic of the period, prioritised the reproduction of established narratives over the incorporation of new realities, offering insight into the ideological and cultural frameworks of the Iberian monarchies during this era.

KEYWORDS: late medieval historiography, Castile, image of Europe, geographical conceptions, *sumarios*

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DREI BETRACHTUNGSWEISEN DER URSPRÜNGE EUROPAS AN DER SÜDLICHEN OSTSEEKÜSTE. ZUM 900. JUBILÄUM DER POMMERSCHEN MISSIONSREISEN DES HEILIGEN OTTO VON BAMBERG



In diesem Jahr wurde vor allem in Polen, aber auch in Deutschland, die Erinnerung an die Missionen des Bamberger Bischofs Otto an die Ostsee in den Jahren 1124–1125 und 1128 in der Öffentlichkeit in erheblichem Maße wiederbelebt. Neben einigen größeren wissenschaftlichen Konferenzen¹ sowie mehreren eintägigen Symposien und Gelegenheitsvorträgen, die in verschiedenen Städten Pommerns veranstaltet wurden, fanden die Gedenkfeiern auch in Form von besonderen Gottesdiensten in Kirchen sowie Veranstaltungen und Konzerten im Freien statt. Viele dieser Initiativen, die sich an ein breiteres Publikum richteten, wurden sachlich mehrfach von der akademischen Welt unterstützt, insbesondere von der Archäologie und der Geschichtswissenschaft.²

1 Hier sind vor allem Wollin–Kammin (The 7th Wolin Medieval Meetings: „The Baptism of Pomerania in the Context of Christianization of the Baltic States in the Middle Ages. On the 900th Anniversary of the Mission of St. Otto of Bamberg in Pomerania“, 17.–19.06.2024) und Wolgast (Fachtagung: „Mission in eine Welt im Wandel. Die Reisen Bischof Ottos von Bamberg nach Pommern (1124/25 und 1128)“, 11.–13.10.2024) zu nennen.

2 Es sollte jedoch nicht vergessen werden, dass das Jubiläum der Mission des heiligen Ottos auch die theologische Gemeinschaft akademisch belebt hat, insbesondere diejenige, die mit der Universität Szczecin verbunden ist – Konferenzen und Forschungsprojekte im Zusammenhang mit diesen Feierlichkeiten wurden in den letzten Jahren unter der Schirmherrschaft der dortigen theologischen Fakultät organisiert. Erwähnenswert ist auch die anthropologische und ethnologische Forschung zur Erinnerung an die Bekehrung der Pomoranen und die Mission

Zu betonen ist an dieser Stelle, dass die Forschung über die zivilisatorischen, religiösen und politischen Prozesse, die zur Einbeziehung des Gebiets, in dem der berühmte, traditionell auch als Apostel von Pommern bezeichnete Missionar³ tätig war, im Kreis des lateinischen Christentums im 10. bis 12. Jh. in den letzten zwei Jahrzehnten eine bedeutende Entwicklung erlebt.

Hervorzuheben sind hier zunächst die beeindruckenden Fortschritte der archäologischen Untersuchungen in Wollin (Wolin) und Lebbin (Lubin) auf der Insel Wollin, die durch umfassende Synthesen dokumentiert sind,⁴ sowie die laufenden Forschungen in Kammin (Kamień), Pyritz (Pyrzyce) oder Klätzkow (Kłodkowo). Die ersten vier dieser Orte waren, natürlich neben Stettin (Szczecin), Kolberg (Kołobrzeg) und Belgard (Białogard), Knotenpunkte im Itinerar der ersten Missionsreise des heiligen Ottos, und der letztgenannte ist ein „Kandidat“ für den ersten Platz im Kreis der Hypothesen, die auf das geheimnisvolle „Kłodona“ (*Clodona*, *Cloden*) hinweisen, das auf der Route zwischen Kammin und Kolberg erwähnt wird.⁵ Klätzkow liegt an der unteren Rega, deren Einzugsgebiet im letzten Jahrzehnt besonders intensiv archäologisch erforscht wurde. Im Rahmen des internationalen Forschungsprojekts „Polska i Pomorze w kształtowaniu cywilizacji europejskiej (od słowiańskich plemion do przełomu XII/XIII w.)“ [„Polen und Pommern in der Gestaltung der europäischen Zivilisation (von den slawischen Stämmen bis zur Wende des 12./13. Jhs.)“] von 2014–2020 wurden dort mehr als 30 Burgwälle erforscht.⁶ Das Projekt umfasste auch Ausgrabungen und Laboranalysen in Deutschland, vor allem in Stolpe an der Oder, sozusagen am Tor zu Pommern an der unteren Oder.⁷

des heiligen Ottos im Diskurs verschiedener gesellschaftlicher Kreise (z. B. der sogenannten historischen Rekonstrukturen).

3 J. Petersohn, *Apostolus Pomeranorum. Studien zur Geschichte und Bedeutung des Apostolepithetos Bischof Ottos I. von Bamberg*, „Historisches Jahrbuch“ 86 (1966), S. 257–294.

4 *Wolin wczesnośredniowieczny*, Bd. 1–2, hg. v. B. Stanisławski, W. Filipowiak, Warszawa 2013–2014 (= *Origines Polonorum* 6–7); *Wolin. The Old Town*, Bd. 1–2, hg. v. M. Rębkowski, Szczecin 2019; *Lubin. Early Medieval Stronghold at the Mouth of the Oder River*, hg. v. M. Rębkowski, Szczecin 2018.

5 Eine ältere Tradition weist in diesem Fall auf Cerkwica/Zirkwitz hin. Noch rätselhafter ist die Lage von „Grodziec“ (*Gridiz*), das Otto nach der Bekehrung von Stettin besuchen sollte.

6 Das Team, das diese Untersuchungen im Rahmen des Projekts durchführte, wurde von Andrzej Janowski geleitet. Die Forschungen hatten an manchen Orten einen Sondierungscharakter und dienten in erster Linie dazu, die Chronologie der Burgwälle im Rega-Einzugsgebiet zu bestimmen und frühere Erkenntnisse in diesem Bereich zu überprüfen. Die Skala dieses Unternehmens zeigt die Monografie: A. Janowski, *Grodziska wczesnośredniowieczne w dorzeczu Regi*, Wrocław 2020 (= *Scripta Historica Europaea* 3).

7 Im Auftrag des Projekts wurde die Zusammenarbeit mit der deutschen Seite von Felix Biermann koordiniert und ein hervorragendes Ergebnis dieser umfassenden Forschung liegt in einer Monografie mehrerer Autoren vor: *Das slawische Gräberfeld von Stolpe und die früh- bis hochmittelalterlichen Bestattungssitten zwischen Ucker und Oder*, hg. v. F. Biermann, Th. Kersting, Ph. Roskoschinski, Wrocław 2020 (= *Scripta Historica Europaea* 2).

Die Forschung zur Christianisierung Pommerns hat sich in den letzten Jahrzehnten nicht minder intensiv entwickelt – hier ist zunächst die Monografie von Marian Rębkowski aus dem Jahr 2007 zu nennen.⁸ Drei Jahre später erschien eine Studie vom Verfasser des hier vorliegenden Textes, die sich der Hagiografie des heiligen Ottos widmete; sie war Teil einer Studie zur Bekehrung der Pomoranen im Raum des soziokulturellen Gedächtnisses im 12. Jh.⁹ Gegenstand der Analyse wurden dabei auch die Ereignisgeschichte sowie die politischen und soziokulturellen Bedingungen des Wirkens des Bamberger Bischofs im Fürstentum Pommern (auch vorchristlicher Kult und Glaube) und schließlich die Missiologie und missionarische Praxis. Diese Forschungen sind Teil eines breiten Diskurses unter Archäologen und Historikern geworden, der u. a. auf Tagungen in Deutschland und Polen angeregt wurde.¹⁰

In den letzten zwei Jahrzehnten hat sich auch die starke, im 19. und 20. Jh. vorhandene Forschungsströmung zu den Transformationen in Pommern vom, wie sie traditionell verstanden wurden, »von Stamm zum Staat« weiterentwickelt.¹¹ Von großer Bedeutung für diese Prozesse war die Ausdehnung der piastischen Staatlichkeit auf die Ostsee im 10. bis 12. Jh. In diesem Forschungsbereich wurden in jüngster Zeit auch die Auswirkungen der Eroberung Pommerns zur Zeit Bolesławs Schiefmunds neu bewertet (siehe unten),

8 M. Rębkowski, *Chryścianizacja Pomorza Zachodniego. Studium archeologiczne*, Szczecin 2007; idem, *Die Christianisierung Pommerns. Eine archäologische Studie*, Bonn 2011.

9 S. Rosik, *Conversio gentis Pomeranorum. Studium świadectwa o wydarzeniu (XII wiek)*, Wrocław 2010. Siehe auch eine Übersetzung der Viten des heiligen Ottos (*Żywoty św. Ottona z Bambergu*, übers. v. S. Rosik, Wrocław 2020), sowie die neuesten Forschungsergebnisse in einer für ein breiteres Publikum bestimmten Form: idem, *Chrzest Pomorza. W 900-lecie pierwszej wyprawy misyjnej św. Ottona z Bambergu*, Wrocław 2024.

10 Nennenswert sind hier u. a. die Konferenzen in Greifswald 2014 („Bischof Otto von Bamberg in Pommern – historische und archäologische Forschungen zum Glaubenswandel des 12. Jahrhunderts“, Greifswald, 27.–29.06.2014), Wrocław 2017 (im Rahmen des Projektes „Polska i Pomorze...“ [„Polen und Pommern...“]: „Poland, Pomerania and Their Neighbours’ Shaping of Medieval European Civilisation before 1300“, Wrocław, 16.–18.11.2017), Wolin 2018 (Konferenz „Otto z Bambergu i jego świat“ [Otto von Bamberg und seine Welt] im Rahmen des Zyklus „Wolińskie Spotkania Mediewistyczne“ [„Wolliner Mediävistentreffen“], Wolin, 3.–5.08.2018). Siehe auch: *Bischof Otto von Bamberg in Pommern. Historische und archäologische Forschungen zu Mission und Kulturverhältnissen des 12. Jahrhunderts im Südwesten der Ostsee. Beiträge einer Tagung aus Anlass des 875. Todestages des Pommernmissionars vom 27. bis 29. Juni 2014 in Greifswald*, hg. v. F. Biermann, F. Ruchhöft, Bonn 2017 (= Studien zur Archäologie Europas 3); *Biskup Otton z Bambergu i jego świat*, hg. v. M. Rębkowski, S. Rosik, Wrocław 2018 (= Wolińskie Spotkania Mediewistyczne 4); *Poland, Pomerania and Their Neighbours’ Shaping of Medieval European Civilisation (10th–12th centuries)*, hg. v. S. Rosik, Wrocław 2020 (= Scripta Historica Europaea 1). Siehe auch: <http://europacentralis.eu>.

11 Eine kritische Zusammenfassung der bis zum Ende des 20. Jhs. durchgeführten Forschungen zu den Ursprüngen Pommerns bietet die Synthese: J.M. Piskorski, *Pomorze plemienne. Historia – Archeologia – Językoznawstwo*, Poznań–Szczecin 2002.

und es wurden auch Konzepte zum Einfluss der frühen Piastenmonarchie auf die Prozesse der Bildung des Fürstentums Pommern entwickelt. Die Entwicklung dieser Forschungen spiegelt sich gut in der Synthese wider, die die Arbeit des oben genannten Projekts („Polska i Pomorze...” [„Polen und Pommern...”])¹² krönt, sowie in der kürzlich erschienenen Monografie über die Anfänge des Fürstentums Pommern.¹³

Neuere Studien betonen relativ stark die Subjektivität der pommerschen Gemeinden selbst in den Prozessen ihrer Eingliederung in den Kreis der christlichen Monarchien. Diese Tendenz entspricht der mittlerweile mehrere Generationen umfassenden Tradition von Studien über die Entstehung von Städten in der elbisch-pommerschen Zone¹⁴ sowie über vorchristliche Formen des sozialen und insbesondere religiösen Lebens – hier sind auch neue Monografien über die einheimischen Rituale der Ostseeslawen,¹⁵ den Wandel des Glaubens und der Kulte dieser Gemeinschaften im 10. bis 12. Jh.¹⁶ erschienen.

Die Aussichten für die Entwicklung weiterer Studien und die Verbreitung ihrer Ergebnisse in den oben genannten Richtungen sehen heute aufgrund der Realisierung bereits begonnener Forschungsprojekte¹⁷ und der zu erwartenden kommenden Intensivierung der Jubiläumsfeierlichkeiten der „Taufe Pommerns“ im Jahr 2028 optimistisch aus. Doch bereits in diesem Stadium der Debatte über den Durchbruch der Christianisierung und die Herausbildung von Strukturen christlicher Monarchien im pommerschen Raum gibt es viele Anregungen zum Nachdenken über die Eigentümlichkeit dieser Prozesse im Kontext modellhafter wissenschaftlicher Auffassungen von der Bildung der kontinentalen Einheit Europas im Mittelalter.

Darauf verweist der Titel dieser Skizze, nämlich die dort erwähnten drei Betrachtungsweisen in der Forschung, die auf der Anwendung der Kategorien Europäisierung, zivilisatorischer Durchbruch und »barbarisches Europa«

12 *Europa reaches the Baltic. Poland and Pomerania in the Shaping of European Civilization (10th–12th Centuries)*, hg. v. S. Rosik, Wrocław 2020 (= Scripta Historica Europaea 6).

13 M. Rębkowski, *Jak powstało Pomorze? Studium tworzenia państwowości we wczesnym średniowieczu*, Warszawa 2020.

14 Die Werke von L. Leciejewicz (*Początki nadmorskich miast na Pomorzu Zachodnim*, Wrocław 1962; *Miasta Słowian północno-południowych*, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1968), die bereits zu den Klassikern gehören, aber immer noch aktuell sind. Siehe u. a. auch Kołobrzeg. *Wczesne miasto nad Bałtykiem*, hg. v. L. Leciejewicz, M. Rębkowski, Warszawa 2007.

15 Siehe besonders das archäologische Studium: K. Kąkolowski, *Obrzędowość religijna Pomorzan we wczesnym średniowieczu. Studium archeologiczne*, Wrocław 2019.

16 S. Rosik, *Od Swaroczyca do Świętowita. Przemiany religii Słowian nadbałtyckich w X–XII wieku*, Warszawa 2023.

17 In diesem Zusammenhang ist auch die Tätigkeit der von Paweł Migdański geleiteten Arbeitsstelle am Historischen Institut der Universität Szczecin zu erwähnen, die die Entwicklung des Christentums in Pommern im Mittelalter und in der Neuzeit erforscht.

beruhen. Ferner wird die Anwendbarkeit dieser Modellkonzepte auf die Untersuchung der Entstehung Pommerns zur Zeit der Christianisierung geprüft. Die Betrachtung der Geschichte dieser besonderen Region wird auf einem sehr allgemeinen Niveau geführt, so dass sie so nah wie möglich an jenes der Synthesen herankommt, die über den ganzen Kontinent reflektieren.

* * *

Anders als bei der ersten Missionsreise Ottos von Bamberg betont seine Hagiografie bezüglich der zweiten, dass der Beschluss zur Bekehrung des Teils der Lutizen im Bereich der Herrschaft des Fürsten Wartislaw I. auf einer Versammlung der Mächtigen, nämlich zu Pfingsten in Usedom, gefasst wurde. Nach dem Bericht von Ebo von Michelsberg hatte die Motivation für diese Entscheidung eine religiöse Dimension: „...die vernünftigere Seite des Konzils argumentierte, dass es eine grenzenlose Torheit sei, dass während sich alle Provinzen der umliegenden Nationen und der ganze römische Kreis dem Joch des christlichen Glaubens unterwarfen, sie wie abgetriebene [Föten] aus dem Schoß der heiligen Mutter Kirche verstoßen wurden“.¹⁸

Diese Nachricht gab Robert Bartlett in seiner Synthese „Making of Europe“¹⁹ Anlass, die Versammlung von Usedom als deutliches Beispiel dafür zu nennen, wie sich der Magnet, der die Mächtigen zur Kirche zog, in Wirklichkeit als die politische Macht und kulturelle Anziehungskraft der römischen Welt und damit des damaligen Imperiums erwies. Es ist schwer, nicht zuzustimmen, dass die hagiografische Darstellung in diesem Fall den Inhalt der beschriebenen Debatte nicht exakt widerspiegelt. Das aber wirft die Frage auf, ob es überhaupt sinnvoll ist, den auf der Versammlung Anwesenden eine andere Sichtweise als die der bloßen Zustimmung zur Bekehrung zuzuschreiben.

Denn diese Entscheidung selbst erweist sich als ausschlaggebend für den späteren Prozess der Christianisierung, der sich in Bartletts Synthese als eine der Determinanten der mittelalterlichen „Europäisierung Europas“ herausstellt. Europäisierung wird im Allgemeinen als das Phänomen der Ausdehnung des Europäischen über den europäischen Kontinent hinaus verstanden, aber in der von britischen Gelehrten entwickelten Konzeption war die axiologische Bindung des „Europäertums“ an den post-karolingischen Kern des Westens wichtig. Von hier aus setzte eine Reihe von Prozessen ein, die vom

¹⁸ Vgl. Ebo, *Żywot św. Ottona biskupa bamberskiego*, MPH n.s., Bd. 7/2, Warszawa 1974, III, 6: „Sed pars sanioris consilii affirmabat infinite nimis esse insipientie, cum omnes circumiacentium nationum provincie, totusque Romanus orbis christiane fidei iugum subierit, se velut abortivos, gremio sancte matris ecclesie abalienari...“

¹⁹ R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe: Conquest, Colonization, and Cultural Change, 950–1350*, [Penguin Books] 1994 [1st ed. 1993], S. 295 f.

10. Jh. bis zur Mitte des 14. Jhs. die kulturelle Homogenisierung der Gesellschaften Europas in seinem westlichen und zentralen Bereich bewirkten.

Dazu gehören: die Bildung von Monarchien, die sich auf römische Traditionen und Recht beziehen; die Christianisierung; die Latinisierung im Bereich der Schriftkultur, der Liturgie, der Schriftlichkeit; gemeinsame Vorstellungen und zeitlich-räumliche Kategorisierungen sowie das Gedächtnis, das sich auf mythische, antike, biblische und legendäre *origines* bezieht; eine Gemeinschaft von Formen der gesellschaftlichen Kommunikation,²⁰ Sitten und Gebräuchen, die aus der Tradition der lateinischen *Christianitas* hervorgeht;²¹ schließlich das Entstehen von Städten mit Selbstverwaltung, die an einen gemeinsamen sozioökonomischen Kreislauf mit Austauschbarkeit des Geldes gebunden sind, oder auch die Verbreitung der Kunststile sowie die Vereinheitlichung des Bildungssystems mit Universitäten auf höchstem Niveau.²² Die Liste ließe sich fortsetzen, aber sie zeigt bereits das Ausmaß und den Charakter eines Phänomens, das man beispielsweise als „Okzidentalisation“ definieren könnte, aber es fällt schwer, die größere Attraktivität der Idee von Europa oder des „Europäertums“ in Bezug auf Axiologie und soziale Emotionen nicht zu schätzen.

Es sei an dieser Stelle darauf hingewiesen, dass das Konzept der Europäisierung Europas in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jhs. zu einem Element des politikwissenschaftlichen Diskurses bei der Definierung der Prozesse der europäischen Integration nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg wurde, deren Endergebnis die Europäische Union war. Der Beitritt der mitteleuropäischen Länder zu Beginn des 21. Jhs. förderte die Suche nach Urmodellen der Europäischen Union in der fernen Vergangenheit, was mit einer Wiederbelebung der akademischen Debatte über die Bedeutung der Kategorie der Europäisierung bei der Erforschung im Bereich der Mediävistik verbunden war.

Tatsächlich ist es schwer zu übersehen, dass die Verwendung der Kategorie der Europäisierung in Mittelalterstudien – in der Annahme anachronistisch und metaphorisch – darauf beruht, bestimmte Parallelen zwischen den wirtschaftlichen, sozialen und politischen Prozessen im 20. Jh. und zu Beginn des 21. Jhs. einerseits und den Transformationen der Realität nach der Stammesperiode andererseits zu sehen, und zwar in einer Forschungspraxis, in der äußere Einflüsse aus dem Westen, der nicht so sehr geografisch als vielmehr kulturell verstanden wird, stark berücksichtigt werden. Bezeichnenderweise

20 Es soll dabei der Bereich der Symbole, des Zeremoniells und der kulturellen Normen, etwa der höfischen, berücksichtigt werden.

21 Hier z. B. auch der Kalender, das Kirchenjahr, die Gemeinschaft der festlichen Bräuche, Namen usw.

22 Die vorliegende Aufzählung stützt sich auf die Debatte über u. a. die Vorschläge von R. Bartlett, siehe *Słowiańszczyzna w tworzeniu Europy (X–XII/XIV w.)*, hg. v. S. Rosik, Wrocław 2008; siehe auch Anm. 20, 21 und 25.

vollzogen sich diese Prozesse im 20. Jh. in der Lebenszeit einer Generation, während sie im Mittelalter mehr als vier Jahrhunderte dauerten.

Es sei auch darauf hingewiesen, dass dieses Modell in den 1980er Jahren in der deutschen Mediävistik aufkam²³ und in einer Reihe von veröffentlichten Synthesen, die einzelnen Ländern, die heute Teil Deutschlands sind oder früher zu diesem gehörten,²⁴ gewidmet waren, wichtige Anwendung fand. Im Falle der slawischen Länder sollte die Europäisierung durch zwei grundlegende Prozesse erfolgen: die Christianisierung, gefolgt von einer Kolonisierungswelle nach deutschem Recht in Verbindung mit einem Zustrom von Siedlern aus dem Westen.²⁵

Auf diese Weise erfolgte – durch die Einordnung in einen breiteren europäischen Kontext – eine aus der Perspektive der Untersuchung der sozioökonomischen Geschichte des Kontinents sowie der Axiologie wichtige Modifizierung und Neubewertung der modellhaften Ansätze zur Bildung der östlichen Länder des Deutschen Reiches im 13. bis 14. Jh., die in der Wissenschaft des 19. Jhs. entwickelt und im 20. Jh. fortgeführt wurden. Wesentlich ist dabei die Betonung der soziokulturellen und ökonomischen Bedeutung der Ostwanderung des deutschen Elements und die weitere Integration der dortigen Länder in die Gemeinschaft des Heiligen Römischen Reiches ab dem 15. Jh., die bereits mit Bezug auf die deutsche Nation definiert wurde.

Hinsichtlich Pommerns in den ersten Jahrzehnten des 12. Jhs. ist jedoch anzumerken, dass dort zum Zeitpunkt des Durchbruchs der Christianisierung bereits staatliche Strukturen entwickelt worden waren und auch die Urbanisierung deutlich sichtbar war. Die konsequente Anwendung des von Bartlett benutzten Europäisierungsmodells erfordert daher auch die Berücksichtigung des Beitrags lokaler Gemeinschaften zu diesem Prozess bereits im 9. bis 12. Jh. sowie des Einflusses der Nachbarländer, allen voran Polens. Die Handelswege von der Ostsee nach Südeuropa spielten eine wichtige Rolle bei der Entstehung der polnischen Staatlichkeit, die sich wiederum bereits im 10. Jh. auf die Küstenzentren ausgeweitet hatte.²⁶

²³ H.-D. Heimann, *Wprowadzenie do historii średniowiecznej*, hg. v. S. Kwiatkowski, Toruń 1999, S. 6–65.

²⁴ Ein anschauliches Beispiel hierfür ist ein Vortrag über die Geschichte Schlesiens im 13. und 14. Jh., siehe P. Moraw, *Das Mittelalter (bis 1469)*, in: *Deutsche Geschichte im Osten Europas*, Bd. 3: *Schlesien*, hg. v. N. Conrads, Berlin 1994, S. 74–139.

²⁵ So z. B. L.E. von Padberg, *Christianisierung Europas im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1998, S. 162.

²⁶ Siehe z. B. S. Moździoch, „Bodaj się Piastów rządy nam święciły”. *Archeologia o początkach państwa piastowskiego*, in: *Populi terrae marisque. Prace poświęcone pamięci Profesora Lecha Leciejewicza*, hg. v. M. Rębkowski, S. Rosik, Wrocław 2011, S. 67–81; S. Moździoch, A. Pleszczyński, ‘Dangerous liaisons’: the coalescence of the Piast state seen against the background of relations between the Interior and Pomerania, in: *Europe reaches...*, S. 163 ff.; A. Paroń, *Excursus: Santok and Milicz as gateways for the Piasts’ expansion beyond their Greater Poland homeland*, in: *Europe reaches...*, S. 225 ff.

Der Zusammenbruch der Piastenherrschaft erfolgte dort spätestens in den 1030er Jahren, aber der Prozess des zivilisatorischen Wandels, der zum Untergang der Stammeswelt führte, wurde nicht aufgehalten. Dieser Prozess wurde von den gerade entstehenden pommerschen Fürstentümern weitergeführt,²⁷ von denen eben die von Wartislaw I. zur Zeit der Mission des heiligen Ottos geleitete Herrschaft am besten untersucht ist. Das Funktionieren dieser Einheit erwies sich als Schlüsselfaktor für den Durchbruch der Christianisierung, der sich damals innerhalb weniger Jahre vollzog.

Durch die Allgemeinheit des Europäisierungsmodells und die Abdeckung mehrerer Veränderungswellen über mehrere Jahrhunderte hinweg – bis zum 14. Jh. – verliert man inzwischen im Wesentlichen die Perspektive einer bestimmten Generation. Mehr noch, die Verknüpfung des „Europäertums“ mit dem, was für den gesamten Westen (den Kreis der *Latinitas*) universell ist und sozusagen von außen kommt, lässt den Beitrag der sogenannten Barbaren zum Kulturkreis Europas aus dem Blickfeld geraten. Auch die Erforschung der Beweggründe für die Entscheidung, das Christentum anzunehmen und sich dem Kreis der christlichen Monarchien anzuschließen, wird in diesem Zusammenhang relativ irrelevant. Die wesentliche Triebkraft dieser Transformation wird in dem militärisch-politischen und sozial-wirtschaftlichen Expansionismus des Westens gesehen.²⁸

Es ist daher nicht verwunderlich, dass in den letzten Jahrzehnten Kritik an einem solchen Ansatz zur Gestaltung der europäischen Zivilisation aus postkolonialer Perspektive laut wurde.²⁹ Das beste Gegenmittel gegen diese Defizite einer ansonsten sehr inspirierenden Europäisierungsstrategie scheint jedoch die einfachste Wendung zur Erforschung der Quellen zu sein: *ad fontes!* Es ist gerade die Analyse der Quellenüberlieferungen, die den Beitrag der sogenannten Barbaren zur Gestaltung des mittelalterlichen Europas hinreichend deutlich macht. Im Falle der Ostseeslawen ist dieser Beitrag umso bedeutender, als dass sie bereits seit dem 9.–10. Jh. in den Fernhandel

27 Siehe: S. Rosik, *Poland of the Piasts and the birth of Pomerania*, in: *Europe reaches...*, S. 281 ff.

28 R. Bartlett, *The Making...*, passim. So wurde der Mechanismus der Bildung der mittel-europäischen Länder bereits von F. Dvornik (*The Making of Central and Eastern Europe*, London 1949) erklärt, der den fränkisch-karolingischen Kern als Ausgangsgebiet dieser Expansion identifizierte.

29 Diese Kritik reicht von Überlegungen zur Interpretation mittelalterlicher Prozesse in einem kolonialen Geist bis zu Bewertungen der Geschichtswissenschaft des 19. und 20. Jhs., die eine solche Perspektive bei der Darstellung der Geschichte bestimmter Regionen Europas einnimmt. Selbst die Terminologie wurde an die Mediävistik angepasst, indem der Begriff „mid-colonial“ für dieses Forschungsfeld eingeführt wurde. Siehe: J.J. Cohen, *Introduction: Midcolonial*, in: *The postcolonial Middle Ages*, hg. v. J.J. Cohen, Basingstoke 2000, S. 1–17; vgl. auch: S. Rosik, T. Wiślicz, *The scope of research in the context of the strategies implemented to date*, in: *Europe reaches...*, S. 12–38.

eingebunden waren und städtische Gemeinschaften entwickelten. Darüber hinaus erwiesen sich die langjährigen politischen Kontakte mit dem Kreis der christlichen Nachbarn (die nicht nur von Feindseligkeit geprägt waren) in der Phase der Entscheidung, zum Christentum überzutreten, als wichtig.

* * *

Im Zusammenhang mit den obigen Ausführungen erscheint daher ein weiterer, inzwischen klassischer Vorschlag für eine ganzheitliche Betrachtung der Ursprünge des mittelalterlichen Europa von Lech Leciejewicz beachtenswert. In seiner Synthese „Nowa postać świata. Narodziny średniowiecznej cywilizacji europejskiej” [Neue Weltform. Die Geburt der mittelalterlichen europäischen Zivilisation]³⁰ hat der Gelehrte die Entstehung des grundlegenden Rahmens der europäischen Zivilisation um das Jahr 1000 auf der Grundlage einer Gemeinschaft mehrerer Kulturkreise – von Byzanz, der Iberischen Halbinsel, Italiens, des nachkarolingischen Kreises (hier besonders des Ottonischen Reichs und Frankreichs), der Britischen Inseln, Skandinaviens und der Inseln des Nordatlantiks sowie des Slawentums – aufgezeigt, die durch das Christentum und ein politisches System in der Tradition des antiken Roms verbunden waren. In zivilisatorischer Hinsicht wurden die Marker dieser „neuen Weltform“ – gemäß der seit dem 19. Jh. etablierten Tradition – die Stadt und die Schrift.

Leciejewicz berücksichtigte die Schlüsselrolle von Byzanz und dem fränkisch-karolingischen Kreis bei der Bildung der kontinentalen Einheit, aber er verband die Idee des „Europäertums“ als solcher mit keinem dieser Gebiete. Europa als zivilisatorische Einheit entstand in dem von ihm vorgeschlagenen Modell erst durch die Summe der genannten Kulturkreise, die von Anfang an durch die aus dem Erbe des *Barbaricum* resultierende Vielfalt gekennzeichnet waren. In dieser Konzeption ist kein Platz für mehrere „Europas“ (z. B. ein „jüngeres“³¹ oder ein „drittes“ Europa³²), noch weniger für die „Okzidentalisation“ des Elements des „Europäertums“.³³ In der Tat wird in solchen Modelldarstellungen der Entstehung Europas die Bedeutung der Interaktionen zwischen den Ländern des Westens und des mittleren Kontinents im 13. und 14. Jh. hervorgehoben, wobei der Schwerpunkt

30 L. Leciejewicz, *Nowa postać świata. Narodziny średniowiecznej cywilizacji europejskiej*, Wrocław 2000 (vgl. idem, *La nuova forma del mondo. La nascita della civiltà europea Medievale*, Bologna 2004); siehe auch: idem, *Przełom cywilizacyjny w świecie słowiańskim we wczesnym średniowieczu*, in: *Słowiańszczyzna w tworzeniu Europy...*, S. 21–27.

31 J. Kłoczowski, *Młodsza Europa. Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia w kręgu cywilizacji chrześcijańskiej średniowiecza*, Warszawa 1998.

32 J. Szűcs, *Trzy Europy*, übers. v. J.M. Kłoczowski, Lublin 1995.

33 L. Leciejewicz, *Nowa postać...*, S. 430 ff.

eindeutig auf der „Okzidentalisation“ liegt.³⁴ Von zentraler Bedeutung in der Konzeption von Leciejewicz ist jedoch die Einbeziehung von Phänomenen, die von grundlegender Bedeutung für das Erreichen des zivilisatorischen Durchbruchs waren, der im 9. bis 11. auf den meisten Gebieten geografischen Europas zu beobachten ist.³⁵

Auf dem Gebiet des sogenannten *Barbaricum* erscheinen nach Leciejewicz die Schriftkultur und die Urbanisierung grundsätzlich als Folge des Christianisierungs- und Staatsgründungsprozesses. Im Falle des Ostseeslawentums, d. h. der Missionszone Ottos von Bamberg, fällt jedoch auf, dass Städte bereits vor der Christianisierung und der dauerhaften Herausbildung der Strukturen der christlichen Monarchie dort entstanden. Zwar wurden diese Zentren, allen voran Wollin und später Stettin, im 10. und 11. Jh. auf der Grundlage des Handels zu einem wichtigen Faktor bei den Kontakten mit dem Christentum, aber zur Zeit des Durchbruchs der Christianisierung und der Herausbildung des pommerschen Fürstentums erwiesen sie sich als feste Stützen der einheimischen Gesellschaftsordnung.

Denn in ihnen stieß der bambergische Bischof auf den größten Widerstand gegen die Bekehrung, und selbst der oberste Fürst Wartislaw konnte ihnen in dieser Frage nicht seinen Willen aufzwingen. Letztlich war es jedoch die Etablierung des Christentums in diesen Zentren, die die Dauerhaftigkeit und das hohe Tempo der sozialen, kulturellen und religiösen Veränderungen sicherte, welche den Anschluss der pommerschen Greifenherrschaft an die kontinentale Einheit ausmachten und das gemeinsame sozial-kulturelle Erbe mitgestaltet haben.³⁶

Diese Beobachtungen machen deutlich, dass lokale Gemeinschaften beim zivilisatorischen Durchbruch eine bedeutende Rolle gespielt haben können und dass der in diesem Fall so wichtige Faktor der Urbanisierung der Einbindung in die Schriftkultur um mehrere Jahrhunderte vorausgegangen sein kann. Ein Vergleich zwischen Pommern und der benachbarten

34 Dieser Forschungsansatz korrespondiert gut mit den Arbeiten des Annales-Milieus, insbesondere mit den Arbeiten von Le Goff, der ausdrücklich auf die Nähe seines Konzepts zum Europäisierungsmodell hinweist (z. B. J. Le Goff, *The Birth of Europe*, Oxford 2005).

35 Das Interesse von Leciejewicz konzentrierte sich auf die sozialen Strukturen und ihren wirtschaftlichen Grundlagen. Die grundsätzliche Bedeutung der Archäologie in seinen Untersuchungen förderte diese Forschungsrichtung. Diese synthetische Sichtweise soll die Studien von Ch. Dawson (z. B. *The Making of Europe. An Introduction to the History of European Unity*, London 1932) ergänzen, der die Idee der kulturellen (und geistigen) Einheit Europas unter Bezugnahme auf die vom Christentum geförderten Ideen des Universalismus entwickelt.

36 Erwähnenswert ist, dass die Frage nach dem soziokulturellen Beitrag des Ostseeslawentums zur Entstehung des Deutschen Reiches bis zum 12. Jh. im Rahmen des Projektes „Germania Slavica“ (Germania Slavica, Bd. 1–6, hg. v. W.H. Fritze, L. Kuchenbuch, W. Ribbe, W. Schich, Berlin 1980–1990) untersucht wurde, mit dessen Autoren Leciejewicz fruchtbar zusammengearbeitet hat.

polnischen Piastenmonarchie – hier waren die Stadtbildungsprozesse bereits eng mit der sozioökonomischen Entwicklung der Zentren der christlichen Monarchie verbunden – verdeutlicht beispielsweise eine bedeutende Unterschiedlichkeit der Varianten des zivilisatorischen Durchbruchs am Beginn der mittelalterlichen europäischen Zivilisation.

* * *

Studien über den zivilisatorischen Durchbruch betonen, ebenso wie Studien, die sich auf das Modell der Europäisierung stützen, die Herausbildung einer neuen soziokulturellen Ordnung in einem Raum, der als sogenanntes *Barbaricum* wahrgenommen wird. Eine alternative Perspektive auf diese Prozesse wurde von Karol Modzelewski in seiner Synthese „Barbarzyńska Europa“ [Barbarisches Europa]³⁷ vorgeschlagen. Er zeigte sozusagen die andere Seite der Christianisierungs- und Staatsbildungsprozesse auf: die Zerstörung der ursprünglichen Ordnung der Stammesgemeinschaften. In diesem Fall ging es jedoch nicht nur um die Vernichtung bestimmter Normen und Formen des kollektiven Lebens, sondern auch um die Folgen für die Entwicklung der postbarbarischen Gesellschaften.

Von grundlegender Bedeutung war in diesem Fall das von dem Gelehrten mit der griffigen Formel »Laizisierung durch Taufe« umschriebene Phänomen,³⁸ nämlich der Hinweis darauf, dass nach der Abschaffung der mit der Versammlung verbundenen religiösen Institutionen – des Heiligtums, der Opfer und vor allem des Orakels – die politische Macht über die Gesellschaft von dem übermächtigen und immanenten priesterlichen Faktor befreit wurde. Damit war der Weg frei für die Entwicklung des Dualismus von Monarchie und Kirche in der Gesellschaftsordnung des Mittelalters und der folgenden Epochen. Die Verwendung des Begriffs Laizisierung zur Beschreibung dieses Phänomens mag anachronistisch erscheinen, aber – abgesehen von einem Hauch intellektueller Provokation – lohnt es sich in diesem Fall, auf die Besonderheit des Verständnisses der Kategorie »Europa barbarica« im Lichte von Modzelewskis Werk aufmerksam zu machen.

Sie wurde auf der Grundlage eines Paradoxons geschmiedet, da frühere Modelle der „Erschaffung Europas“ von der Gegenüberstellung von „Europäertum“ und Barbarei beherrscht wurden. Modzelewski unterstreicht hingegen sowohl das lange Fortbestehen von Elementen des *Barbaricum* im sozialen Leben bereits christianisierter Gesellschaften als auch die Langfristigkeit

³⁷ K. Modzelewski, *Barbarzyńska Europa*, Warszawa 2004.

³⁸ Ibidem, S. 356 ff., 460; siehe auch: idem, *Laicyzacja przez chrzest*, in: *Studia wybrane z dziejów społeczeństwa, prawa i ustroju Europy wczesnośredniowiecznej*, hg. v. M.R. Pauk, A. Pieniądz, Warszawa 2018, S. 468–485.

der durch ihre Ausrottung bewirkten Transformationen. Die Laizisierung, die offensichtlich nicht ausreicht, um die Stammesgesellschaften und die Gesellschaften, die sich in der Phase des Durchbruchs zur Christianisierung befinden, zu charakterisieren, stellt sozusagen die endgültige Wirkung des damals eingeleiteten Prozesses dar. Im Grunde wird die Einführung des Christentums von vornherein als ein Akt der Zerstörung betrachtet.

Bezeichnenderweise trägt das letzte Kapitel von „Barbarzyńska Europa“ den Titel „Das Ende der Barbarenwelt“. Ohne vor essayistischen Konventionen zurückzuschrecken, stellt der Autor darin die Zerstörung der vernakulären Heiligtümer und Idole als eine Art pankosmische Katastrophe dar, die auch das gesellschaftliche Leben erfasst. Kurz gesagt: Der Himmel stürzt auf die Erde. Von zentraler Bedeutung ist dabei die Vorstellung vom Tod der Götter, die bisher in mythischen Bildern die Garanten der Weltordnung waren. Die Liquidierung der Götzen, die als Tötung der Götter dargestellt wurde, wurde als Quelle eines unglaublichen sozialen Traumas behandelt, in der Überzeugung, dass für die christianisierte Bevölkerung an diesem Punkt die Welt ins Nichts stürzen würde...

Diesmal ist es jedoch schwierig, die Gültigkeit dieser Vision in einer historischen Perspektive zu verteidigen, da sie sich strikt auf die Welt der sogenannten Barbaren bezieht und nicht auf die Folgen ihres Untergangs. Der Anachronismus in einem solchen Fall ist also ein Fehler in der Argumentation, und es ist schwierig, ihn hier nicht zu bemerken. Denn es wird den Barbaren ein Geisteszustand zugeschrieben, der jenem des „Wahnsinnigen“ aus Friedrich Nietzsches Erzählung ähnelt, welcher, als er den Tod Gottes verkündet, in Entsetzen verfällt, weil er den Kosmos bereits in den bodenlosen Abgrund des Nichts stürzen und das Verschwinden aller Gesetze, die bis dahin die soziale Ordnung garantierten, sieht.³⁹ Ohne hier in eine breitere Debatte über die Ursprünge dieser Vision in der europäischen Kultur nach der Aufklärung einzutreten, ist zu betonen, dass die Zuschreibung eines solchen Traumas an die sogenannten Barbaren wegen deren unterschiedlicher Mentalität und weltanschaulicher Grundlagen keine Rechtfertigung findet.

Selbst ein möglicher Tod der Götter, wie er sich im über den slawischen Kontext hinausgehenden Bereich der indoeuropäischen Mythologien zeigt, führte allenfalls zu einer radikalen Veränderung des Pantheons und damit der Weltordnung, nicht aber zu ihrer Vernichtung. Andererseits ist es im Falle der Forschung zu den Missionen Ottos von Bamberg im Fürstentum Pommern schwierig, überhaupt zu argumentieren, dass die Abschaffung von Heiligtümern und Idolen den Tod von Gottheiten bedeutete. Es genügt zu erwähnen, dass der Triglav-Kult, der auf diese Weise in Stettin zwischen 1124 und 1125 abgeschafft wurde, bald wieder aufkam, und zwar als

39 M. Heidegger, *Drogi lasu*, übers. v. J. Gierasimiuk et al., Warszawa 1997, S. 175 ff.

Parallele zur Christusverehrung⁴⁰. Diese Situation illustriert treffend, dass für einen bedeutenden Teil der von Otto christianisierten Bevölkerung die Etablierung einer neuen religiösen Ordnung nicht so sehr die Vernichtung des Pantheons als vielmehr dessen Neudefinition (mit der Möglichkeit weiterer Modifikationen) bedeutete.

Hervorzuheben ist auch, dass die Entscheidung zur Bekehrung während Ottos Mission durch Versammlungen in einzelnen Zentren entlang seines Missionsweges getroffen wurde. Ja, sie war bedingt durch eine spezifische Situation des politischen und militärischen Drucks der christlichen Nachbarn, insbesondere Polens. Es ist jedoch zu betonen, dass sich die Pomoranen nicht in einer Besatzungssituation befanden, sondern ihre Entscheidung im Angesicht einer seit Generationen andauernden gegenseitigen Feindschaft mit dem Kreis der christlichen Nachbarn und zugleich im Bewusstsein ihrer fortdauernden Überlegenheit in dieser Konfrontation trafen. So wurde die eigentümliche Ineffizienz der einheimischen religiösen Systeme zur Gewährleistung der Sicherheit der Gemeinschaft immer deutlicher.

Es überrascht nicht, dass das Angebot, sich einer Gemeinschaft mit Christus als mystischem Souverän⁴¹ an der Spitze anzuschließen, in diesen Gemeinschaften immer mehr Anhänger fand. Sie folgten im Übrigen dem Beispiel des obersten Fürsten Wartislaw, der bereits Christ war. Die Öffnung der Tore einzelner Zentren für das Christentum während der Missionen Ottos und die für einige Mitglieder dieser Gemeinschaften schmerzhaft Demontage der einheimischen Institutionen und heiligen Stätten wurde also letztlich durch ihre Entscheidung als Ganzes bestimmt. Dies war auch Ausdruck der Subjektivität der pommerschen Gemeinschaften, die im Akt der Konversion auf sozialer Ebene respektiert wurde. Abschließend bleibt festzuhalten, dass das von Modzelewski skizzierte Modell des „Endes der Barbarenwelt“ in einem der grundlegenden Aspekte mit den in den Schriftquellen fassbaren Realien der Christianisierungszeit in Pommern nur wenig im Einklang steht.⁴²

40 *Die Prüfeninger Vita Bischof Ottos I. von Bamberg nach der Fassung des Großen Österreichischen Legendars*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germ. in usum scholarum 71, hg. v. J. Petersohn, Hannover 1999, III, 5; Ebo, *Żywot...*, III, 1; Herbord, *Dialog o życiu św. Ottona z biskupa Bamberskiego*, Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 7/3, Warszawa 1974, III, 16. Siehe z. B. S. Rosik, *Conversio...*, S. 357 ff.

41 Es wird vermutet, dass die polabischen Slawen Christus als den „Stammesgott“ der Deutschen betrachteten. Ausführlicher zu diesem Phänomen: H.-D. Kahl, *Heidnisches Wendentum und christliche Stammesfürsten. Ein Blick in die Auseinandersetzung zwischen Gentil- und Universalreligion im abendländischen Hochmittelalter*, „Archiv für Kulturgeschichte“ 44 (1962), S. 88–95.

42 In diesem Fall geht es jedoch in erster Linie darum, dass den sogenannten Barbaren fälschlicherweise die Weltanschauungskategorien zugeschrieben werden, die den mit dem Atheismus (in ontologischer Hinsicht) vertrauten Gesellschaften eigen sind.

Doch gerade die Berücksichtigung der Mentalität der sogenannten Barbaren, die in einem Umfeld der mündlichen Überlieferung lebten, ist das grundlegende Forschungspostulat, das in Modzelewskis Synthese verwirktlicht wird.⁴³ In Bezug auf die Pomoranen ist das eigentümliche Phänomen der *interpretatio Slavica* des christlichen Gottes als „Gott der Deutschen“ hervorzuheben, der schließlich auch Teil des von ihnen verehrten Pantheons werden konnte. In einem solchen mentalen Kontext implizierte selbst die Etablierung des Christuskultes auf einer Monopolbasis im gesellschaftlichen Leben eigentlich eine Monolatrie nach dem Vorbild des früheren Kultes, z. B. jenes des Triglavs in Stettin. Solche polytheistischen mythologischen Vorstellungen hielten sich vor allem in den Kreisen der *illiterati* über Generationen hinweg und fanden in der volkstümlichen Dämonologie eine neue Verkörperung.

Eine besondere Erscheinung unter den Phänomenen der *longue durée* war das Bestehen einer aus der Stammeszeit hervorgegangenen Versammlung im städtischen Umfeld Pommerns zur Zeit der Christianisierung. Dies zeigt sich deutlich in der Verbindung dieser Institution mit einem Orakel und einem von Priestern geleiteten Tempel, wofür sich ein klassisches Beispiel in den Beschreibungen von Stettin in der Hagiografie des heiligen Ottos findet, aber auch von Wollin oder Wolgast.⁴⁴ Die Abschaffung der Orakel und die allmähliche⁴⁵ Zurückdrängung des Einflusses der heidnischen Priester auf das öffentliche Leben der Pomoranen nach der Einführung des Christentums passt gut zur Idee der »Laizisierung durch die Taufe«, wenn es darum geht, die Bedeutung des sozialen Wandels sowie dessen Triebkräfte zu interpretieren.

Der pommersche Herzog Wartislaw I., dessen Macht durch den auf Versammlungen zum Ausdruck gebrachten Willen seiner Untertanen, der Ältesten, legitimiert wurde, wurde nach der Einführung des Christentums von einer wichtigen Einschränkung seiner Machtausübung durch heidnische Priester befreit. Es ist daher nicht verwunderlich, dass er die Mission Ottos unterstützte, offensichtlich in einer recht spezifischen Situation: der politischen Abhängigkeit vom polnischen Herrscher Bolesław Schiefmund, der den Pomoranen in den Verträgen, die die Eroberung

43 K. Modzelewski, *Barbarzyńska Europa...*, S. 17 ff.

44 Daher ist es schwierig, diese Versammlungen als ein Phänomen zu betrachten, das im 11. und 12. Jh. im Zusammenhang mit der Entwicklung der frühstädtischen Zentren entstanden ist, wie K. Zernack (*Die burgstädtischen Volksversammlungen bei den Ost- und Westslaven. Studien zur verfassungsgeschichtlichen Bedeutung des Veče*, Wiesbaden 1967, S. 227 ff.) es wollte. Für eine breitere Diskussion siehe: S. Rosik, *Conversio...*, S. 225 f. (hier auch eine Auswahl an Fachliteratur).

45 Schließlich waren die heidnischen Priester trotz ihrer Verbannung nach Ottos erster Mission immer noch in der Lage, in Stettin den Glaubensabfall herbeizuführen, weshalb man von einer allmählichen Beseitigung ihres Einflusses spricht. Siehe oben, Anm. 40.

ihres Landes abschlossen, die Verpflichtung zur Konversion auferlegte. Die ansonsten unbequeme politische Lage des pommerschen Herrschers eröffnete jedoch vor ihm eine völlig neue Perspektive für die Entwicklung seiner Staatlichkeit.

Nach innen konnte er seine Position innerhalb der lokalen Gemeinschaften festigen, und nach außen, wo er nicht mehr von ständigen Invasionen und Eroberungen bedroht war, nahm er einen Platz unter den christlichen Herrschern ein. Dies machte er sich zunutze, um ein geschickter Akteur in der Außenpolitik und gleichzeitig der Stammvater der Dynastie der Greifen zu werden, die in den folgenden Jahrhunderten Pommern regierte. Ihre Vertreter setzten sein Werk fort und erreichten bereits im 12. Jh. die Unabhängigkeit von Polen und weiter die Eingliederung ihres Fürstentums in die Strukturen des Römisch-Deutschen Reiches.

* * *

Abschließend zu dieser Skizze bleibt festzuhalten, dass die oben diskutierten Modellvorlesungen zu den Ursprüngen Europas weiterhin als wertvolle Anregungen für Forschungsrichtungen gelten. Allerdings handelt es sich um Ansichten mit einem hohen Allgemeinheitsgrad, die durch eine inhärente Simplifizierung gekennzeichnet sind. In der Forschung zu spezifischen Gemeinschaften erfordert die Anwendung dieser Konzepte daher eine Überprüfung ihrer Nützlichkeit und erhebliche Anpassungen.

Im Hinblick auf Modzelewskis „Europa der Barbaren“ ist es schwierig, diese Synthese so zu verstehen, dass die Christianisierung lediglich als ein Akt der „Zerstörung“ der barbarischen Welt betrachtet wird.⁴⁶ In der Tat charakterisiert die Idee der »Laizierung durch die Taufe«, die in diesem Werk so prominent ist, die soziokulturellen Transformationen, die zum Kennzeichen einer neuen, postbarbarischen Ordnung wurden. Modzelewskis Überlegungen vertiefen in diesem Fall das Verständnis der Mechanismen der Prozesse, die den zivilisatorischen Durchbruch konstituieren – wie sie unter anderem in der bereits erwähnten Synthese von Lech Leciejewicz dargestellt werden –, und ihrer weitreichenden Auswirkungen. Aus dieser Perspektive lässt sich feststellen, dass Pommern Teil einer kontinentalen Gemeinschaft wurde, in der der Dualismus von staatlicher und kirchlicher Autorität seinen Platz fand.

Tatsächlich spielte dieser Dualismus im Falle der Expansion von Bolesław Schiefmund nach Pommern eine bedeutende Rolle; und diese Expansion war, wie oben erwähnt, ein wichtiger Faktor für die Integration dieses Landes in den Kreis der *Christianitas*. Denn es ist hervorzuheben, dass die

46 K. Modzelewski, *Barbarzyńska Europa...*, S. 454 f.

Unterordnung Pommerns unter Polen zu dieser Zeit auf der Verpflichtung zur Tributzahlung und gelegentlicher militärischer Hilfe beruhte. Es handelte sich also um eine relativ schwache Abhängigkeit, etwa im Vergleich zu den Zeiten der ersten Piasten, denen es gelang, in den Burgen an der Persante – in Belgard und Kolberg – für mehrere Jahrzehnte eigene Mannschaften zu stationieren.⁴⁷ Bolesław Schiefmund musste jedoch angesichts der bereits weiter fortgeschrittenen Konsolidierungsprozesse der pommerschen Gemeinden im Fürstentum Pommern und in den Städten mit Stettin an der Spitze handeln. Und in dieser Situation gewann in der Politik dieses Herrschers das Bestreben, die Pomoranen zu bekehren und kirchlich an die polnische Monarchie zu binden, eine entscheidende Bedeutung.

Zwar eröffneten die polnisch-pommerschen Kriege und die im Anschluss daran geschlossenen Verträge die Möglichkeit einer offiziellen Christianisierung des Herrschaftsgebiets von Wartislaw I. Doch ging es dabei aus politischer Sicht nicht so sehr um die Festigung territorialer Eroberungen, wie man früher meinte, sondern um den Aufbau kirchlicher Verbindungen parallel zu politischen und militärischen Maßnahmen. Bolesław Schiefmund initiierte die Mission des heiligen Ottos von Bamberg sowie die Errichtung eines Bistums in Pommern, das 1140 in Wollin entstand.⁴⁸ Die offizielle Einführung des Christentums im Fürstentum Wartislaws wiederum machte es bereits zu einem festen Glied im Netzwerk der christlichen Monarchien rund um das damalige römische (römisch-deutsche) Reich. Bis zum Lebensende von Bolesław Schiefmund stand dieses Fürstentum unter seiner direkten Oberhoheit. Der Anspruch darauf wurde ihm also nicht nur durch seine politische und militärische Dominanz verliehen, sondern auch durch die parallele Umsetzung des damaligen Leitbildes eines christlichen Herrschers, d. h. durch die Sorge um die Kirche und den Ausbau ihrer Gemeinschaft.⁴⁹

In der ersten Hälfte des 12. Jhs. erfuhr Pommern also nachhaltige Veränderungen, die es zu einem Teil der europäischen Zivilisation machten. Die Entwicklung der Staatsbildungsprozesse ermöglichte eine stärkere Verbindung zwischen den Städten und der herzoglichen Macht, und mit der

47 Im Jahr 1000 wurde sogar die Diözese Kolberg gegründet, die Gnesen (Gniezno) unterstellt war (genauer gesagt: *aecclēsia Salsae Cholbergiensis* – vgl. *Thietmari Merseburgensis Episcopi Chronicon*, hg. v. R. Holtzmann, *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores rerum Germ.* n.s. 9, Berlin 1935, VII, 72); siehe u. a. S. Rosik, *Conversio...*, S. 21 ff.

48 Der erste pommersche Bischof, Adalbert, wurde von Bolesław Schiefmund (und Wartislaw I.) ernannt, siehe: *Pommersches Urkundenbuch*, Bd. 1: 786–1253, Teil 1, *Urkunden*, bearb. K. Conrad, Köln–Wien 1970, Nr. 43, S. 47.

49 Die Idee einer solchen Neubewertung der Bedeutung der Christianisierung im Verhältnis zu den Eroberungen in der pommerschen Politik von Bolesław Schiefmund ist in den letzten zehn Jahren entwickelt worden, siehe: S. Rosik, *Crucial conquests*, in: *Europe reaches...*, S. 346 ff., bes. 356 f.; idem, *Chrzeit Pomorzan...*, S. 29 ff.

Organisation und Liturgie der Kirche trat auch ein dort bis dahin fehlendes, aber wesentliches Element im Konzept des zivilisatorischen Durchbruchs nachhaltig in Erscheinung: die Schriftkultur. Die Latinisierung begünstigte in diesem Fall die Verwendung der Kategorie der Europäisierung („Okzidentalisation“) bei der Charakterisierung des sich vollziehenden Wandels ebenso wie die Einbeziehung seiner Vergangenheit in die gemeinsame Legende des lateinischen Kreises⁵⁰ und in die Erlösungsgeschichte,⁵¹ die bereits zu dieser Zeit zu beobachten war, allerdings nur in Quellen, die außerhalb Pommerns entstanden sind. Es sind klare Beispiele für die Einbeziehung der sogenannten Barbaren in den Kulturraum von der *Chrisitanitas*, an dem zumindest die pommersche Elite schon damals beteiligt war.

Aufgrund der Ermächtigung der Pomoranen bei den soziopolitischen Veränderungen in Pommern in der Zeit der Otto-Mission ist die Anwendung des Europäisierungsmodells – das Eroberung und Kolonisierung bei der Schaffung Europas in Gebieten, die als peripher betrachtet wurden (darunter eben Pommern), bevorzugt – fragwürdig. Im 11. und frühen 12. Jh. herrschte für die Bewohner des Ostseeraums ein ständiger Kriegszustand oder die Gefahr eines solchen. In dieser Situation kam es zu einer Konsolidierung der lokalen Gemeinschaften; von Bedeutung ist dabei, dass dies unter der in Pommern etablierten Obrigkeit geschah. Die Anwendung der Europäisierungsstrategie scheint daher allenfalls zur Charakterisierung der sozioökonomischen Entwicklung des Greifenherzogtums im 13. und 14. Jh. gerechtfertigt. Im Falle der früheren Prozesse der Staatsbildung und der Christianisierung, die in diesen Überlegungen betrachtet werden, erscheint es hingegen angemessener, das Bild dieser Prozesse in den Rahmen einer Synthese zu stellen, die auf der Anwendung der Kategorie des zivilisatorischen Durchbruchs beruht.

50 Ein spektakuläres Beispiel ist die bereits in den 1140er Jahren bestätigte Zuweisung römischer *origines* an Wollin, den ersten Sitz des pommerschen Bistums, und, genauer gesagt, der Hinweis auf Julius Cäsar als Gründer der Stadt – *Die Prüfeninger Vita...*, II, 5.

51 Der Aposteltitel, der Otto von Bamberg bereits in der Mitte des 12. Jhs. verliehen wurde, deutet darauf hin, dass die Bekehrung der Pomoranen in die universelle Geschichte der Verkündigung des Evangeliums *ad gentes* einbezogen wurde, siehe insbesondere: Ebo, *Żywot...*, III, 27 („Nam cum Petrus Iudeam, Paulus Greciam, Andreas Achaïam, Iohannes Asiam, Thomas Indiam, Gregorius Angliam, ceterique dominici gregis arietes, singuli suos eterno iudici reportant manipulos, Otto etiam inter eos Pomeraniam gaudens adducet...“).

ABSTRACT

Three perspectives on the origins of Europe on the southern Baltic coast. On the 900th anniversary of the Pomeranian missionary journeys of St Otto of Bamberg

The article reflects on the usefulness of three now classic models in medieval studies for interpreting the beginnings of European civilisation on the southern Baltic coast, based on the categories of civilisational breakthrough, Europeanisation and 'barbarian Europe'. The point of reference is the study of the origins of Pomerania, in particular the Christianisation breakthrough which took place through the missions of St. Otto of Bamberg in the 1120s.

Keyword: Pomerania, St. Otto of Bamberg, civilisational breakthrough, Europeanisation, *Europa barbarica*

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ECONOMIC DIVISIONS OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE FROM THE THIRTEENTH TO THE SIXTEENTH CENTURIES IN THE RESEARCH OF POLISH HISTORIOGRAPHY



Economic space is part of the larger whole that is historical space.¹ In the research of historians, it is most often viewed through the prism of political (interstate) and administrative divisions, regardless of the subject matter of the research. This is also the case in economic historiography, even though this branch of study has a long tradition, dating back to the second half of the eighteenth century (also in Poland).² Economic history has always been viewed within the borders of its own countries. Quite early, however, since the 1870s, the area of the German Hansa and the economic history not only of its single member cities, but of the entire league, whose reach extended far beyond the territory of the Kingdom of Germany, were taken up.³ Over time, researchers of the pre-industrial

¹ W. Reinhard, *Lebensformen Europas. Eine historische Kulturanthropologie*, München 2006 (2nd ed.), p. 396.

² W. Kula, *Problemy i metody historii gospodarczej*, Warszawa 1963, pp. 12-15, 44-45; see also the English translation of this work, which is an abridged version of the Polish original edition: idem, *The Problems and Methods of Economic History*, transl. R. Szeleter, Aldershot-Burlington USA-Singapore-Sydney 2001, pp. 1-3, 24; K. Olendzki, *Główne kierunki badań nad historią gospodarczą*, in: *Informator metodologiczny do ćwiczeń z historii gospodarczej*, ed. W. Morawski, Warszawa 2000, pp. 55-59; cf. A. F. Grabski, *Dzieje historiografii*, Poznań 2006 (2nd ed.), pp. 572-577.

³ In 1871 the oldest European economic journal, "Hansische Geschichtsblätter", was called into existence (C. Cipolla, *Between Two Cultures. An Introduction to Economic History*, transl. Ch. Woodall, New York-London 1992, p. 5).

economies began to perceive their history by means of a variety of spatial categories - including not only individual historical regions, but also the European continent.⁴ After the Second World War, publications appeared on intercontinental ties in the Middle Ages and on global history in the period before the Industrial Revolution.⁵ Certain schemes of spatial divisions on a scale larger than national borders but smaller than the outlines of continents were also developed. These schemes of thought have also become points of reference for Polish economic historiography, sometimes inspiring it and sometimes provoking objections. I would like to discuss a few of them here in order to provide a background to Polish concepts of the division of the economic space of Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages and early modern times.

Perhaps the oldest scheme is the dichotomous division into East and West, which dates back to the pre-scientific era.⁶ The two parts of this division denoted different (to varying degrees) areas of civilization, which were given different content and value in various parts of the world.⁷ Restricting ourselves to the Europe of the High and the Late Middle Ages, it must be said that the basis and incentive for using this dichotomy was the division of the continent into the Latin and the Orthodox parts. This division was also a cultural and political division due to the aspiration of various states to attain supremacy over the Christian world (the Holy Roman Empire, the papacy, the Byzantine Empire). However, a certain problem was the course of the borderlines between these two circles of civilization and reconciliation of these borders with political divisions. Indeed, these civilizational borders not infrequently ran differently than political borders, *i.e.*, within certain states (*e.g.*, the culturally very diverse Kingdom of Hungary,⁸ or the Kingdom of Poland from 1366,⁹ or the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the second half of the fourteenth century¹⁰).

4 See a list of syntheses in the Polish edition of J. Kulisher's work: J. Kulischer, *Powszechna historia gospodarcza średniowiecza i czasów nowożytnych*, vol. 1, transl. W. Głuchowski, Warszawa 1961, pp. 361-362.

5 F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II*, vol. 1-2, Paris 1949; I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, vol. 1: *Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*, New York-San Francisco-London 1974 (this work refers partly to the late Middle Ages, see: *ibidem*, pp. 14-63); F. Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle et capitalisme (XVe-XVIIIe siècle)*, vol. 1-3, Paris 1979; J.L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony. The World System A.D. 1250-1350*, New York-Oxford 1989.

6 A. Wierzbicki, *Wschód a Zachód w koncepcjach dziejów Polski*, Warszawa 1984, pp. 5-14.

7 *Ibidem*, p. 10.

8 P. Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen. A History of Medieval Hungary (895-1526)*, transl. T. Pálosfalvi, London-New York 2001, p. 118.

9 P.W. Knoll, *The Rise of the Polish Monarchy. Piast Poland in East Central Europe (1320-1370)*, Chicago-London 1972, pp. 128-177.

10 S.C. Rowell, *Baltic Europe*, in: *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. 6, ed. M. Jones, Cambridge 2008, pp. 706, 709, 727; N.S. Kollman, *The Principalities of Rus' in the fourteenth century*, in: *ibidem*, p. 769.

In the nineteenth century the concept in academic circles emerged of dividing Europe into two parts, the development of which began in the fifteenth century, and which led to a division into an increasingly artisanal-industrial West with a free peasant population, and "the East", where a manorial organization of agriculture, based on the forced labor of a dependent rural population, prevailed.¹¹ The border between the two zones did not coincide with religious-political divisions, as it was considered to run along the Elbe River. This division of Europe became the paradigm of economic historiography dealing with the end of the Middle Ages up until the modern era in the twentieth century. In the second half of the twentieth century, however, the uniformity and invariability of the socioeconomic system within each of these two vast territories (between fifteenth and eighteenth century) began to be questioned.¹²

For slightly earlier times, namely the High and the late Middle Ages, a representative example of presenting economic history on an East/West basis constitutes the two classic syntheses by the eminent Russian economic historian, Iosif Kulisher. The first, published in 1909 and reprinted many times, dealt with Western Europe.¹³ In the volume on the Middle Ages, the author focused mainly on the countries of "Old Europe": Italy, France, Spain, England, and the German-speaking countries. Central European countries are not mentioned very often, while some of the Baltic cities of Central Europe, as opposed to inland ones, appear more frequently.¹⁴ Kulisher's second work, first published in the USSR in 1925, dealt with the economic history of Rus' and Russia - from their beginnings up to the eighteenth century.¹⁵ Neither of Kulisher's two works covered

11 A. Wyczański ascribed the invention of this idea to Karl Marx (A. Wyczański, *Wschód a Zachód Europy w początkach epoki nowożytnej*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 6-7).

12 Ibidem, passim; M. Cerman, *Villagers and lords in Eastern Europe, 1300-1800*, Basingstoke 2012, passim.

13 I use the first German translation of this work (J. Kulischer, *Allgemeine Wirtschafts-geschichte des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, vol. 1-2 München-Berlin 1928) as well as the Polish one (J. Kulischer, *Powszechna historia gospodarcza...*, vol. 1-2, Warszawa 1961), which is a translation from the second German edition of 1954. The Polish edition includes very detailed indexes (including index of placenames).

14 The frequency of mentions regarding the Central European states: Bohemia - 10 x, Hungary - 9 x, Poland - 7 x. The frequency of mentions regarding the Central European cities: Gdańsk - 10 x, Szczecin - 8 x, Wrocław - 5 x, Prague - 3 x, Kutná Hora - 1 x, Jihlava - 1 x, Krakow - 1 x, Lviv - 1 x, Buda - 1 x, Pest - 1 x. It is worth noting, that also other important economic centres from outside of Central Europe were not often mentioned in this book, as: Vienna - 10 x, Regensburg - 9 x, Marseilles - 9 x, Troyes - 5 x, Erfurt - 5 x, Greifswald - 5 x, Leipzig - 4 x, Halle - 4 x, Stralsund - 3 x.

15 J. Kulisher, *Istoriâ russkogo narodnogo hozâjstva*, Moskwa 2004. The medieval period was described in the first part of this synthesis (ibidem, pp. 33-249). According to M. Małowist this work is less valuable than the synthesis on the economic history of Western Europe (idem, *Wstęp*, in: J. Kulischer, *Powszechna historia gospodarcza...*, p. VI).

the Balkans. Thus, the division of Europe in economic terms was based on the counter-positioning of Russia against the West.

The perpetuation of the paradigmatic division between East and West in historical science was also influenced by historical conditions after the Second World War. Much of Europe was divided into two politico-military and economic blocs, between which the border, on the territory of the two German states, followed, more or less, the course of the Elbe River. However, in medieval studies, attempts have begun to nuance this dichotomous picture of the space of medieval Europe. It seems that after 1945 it became more popular than before to use the term "Słowiańszczyzna" to mean both Slavic countries (= lands of the Slavs) and Slavic peoples.¹⁶ In the territorial sense (*i.e.*, lands of the Slavs) it included both countries and peoples belonging to Latin and Orthodox Europe. In practice, the procedure was not always consistent from the point of view of the distribution of Slavic peoples, as the territories of the Kingdom of Hungary were also included here, as well as the territories of present-day Romania.¹⁷ Quite quickly, concepts also began to be formulated, which consisted of distinguishing an area with its own culture and political significance located between the German-speaking countries and the Grand Duchy of Moscow/Russia/USSR. Oskar Halecki, a Polish historian active in exile after 1945, coined the term "East Central Europe" in 1950.¹⁸ It was to include all the territories between the German-speaking countries and the Grand Duchy of Moscow/Russia, *i.e.*: the former territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (including Livonia), the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Hungarian monarchy, as well as Greece. A very important role was also played by the famous 1981 essay by Hungarian researcher Jenő Szűcs (translated quite quickly into French and German),¹⁹ in which he distinguished and characterized a "third Europe", by which he meant Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The concept of a separate East Central Europe, also known interchangeably as Central Europe, gained popularity after the democratic changes in this

16 *Słownik języka polskiego*, ed. M. Szymczak, vol. 3, Warszawa 1995, p. 240.

17 As an example the monumental encyclopaedia may be given *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich*, vol. 1-8, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1961-1996, or the synthesis by J. Kłoczowski, *Europa słowiańska w XIV-XV wieku*, Warszawa 1984.

18 G. Korolov, *Dwie <Europy Środkowe> Oskara Haleckiego w <cieniu imperializmów>*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny", 124 (2013), 4, pp. 689, 691; J. Kłoczowski, *Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia jako przedmiot badań*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny", 124 (2013), 4, p. 833; E. Mühle, *Uwagi o ograniczonej przydatności pojęcia "Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia" ("Ostmitteleuropa") w badaniach mediewistycznych*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 124 (2013), 4, pp. 865-866.

19 J. Szűcs, *Vázlat Európa három történeti régiójáról*, Budapest 1981. The subsequent editions abroad: in French (*Les trois Europes*, Paris 1985), German (*Die drei historische Regionen Europas*, Frankfurt am Main, 1990) as well as in Polish (*Trzy Europy*, Lublin 1995).

part of the continent in 1989-1991, when the countries of the region began to aspire to join the main organizations of the West: NATO, and the European Union. However, despite the growing circulation of such geographical-civilizational concepts in science, journalism, and politics, the perception of Europe through the prism of the dichotomous division into East and West has proved to be durable. In principle, all of the above-mentioned divisions and concepts still have reason for existence in academic discourse, although their popularity is variable. Unfortunately, and this should be emphasized, when drawing the extent of the above-mentioned region, economic life was not taken into account at all.

Another way of dividing historical space, including economic space, was between "the North" and "the South". The latter concept encompassed the Mediterranean region, while the North embraced the rest of Europe north of the Pyrenees and the Alps: from Switzerland to Norway and Iceland, and from France to the Ural mountains. Unlike the division between East and West, the division between the South (the Mediterranean world) and the rest, or "North," is much more obvious. It partly stems from geography and is reinforced by ancient history, especially the division of the European continent at the time into the Roman Empire and the Barbaricum. The division into South and North, thus understood, also proved useful for the study of the economy of the Middle Ages and early modern times. It was applied, albeit under other names, by Fernand Braudel in 1949 ("Europe et Méditerranée").²⁰ On the other hand, its right of existence in economic historiography was secured by two outstanding scholars: Robert S. Lopez and Michael M. Postan. In the second volume of his 1952 fundamental synthesis of European economic history, Lopez published an extensive chapter on the trade of the South, while Postan devoted his text to the trade of the broader North.²¹ In Polish medieval studies, however, it was rarely used, although the prominent city researcher Jan Ptaśnik (1876-1930) recognized this division when it came to cities.²² In later times, Polish medievalists rarely dealt with it²³ and tended not to use it due to the much more important, for the Polish lands, latitudinal economic connections.

20 F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée...*, particularly pp. 142, 161 ff.

21 R.S. Lopez, *The Trade of Medieval Europe: the South*, in: *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, vol. 2: *Trade and Industry in the Middle Ages*, ed. M.M. Postan, E.E. Rich, Cambridge 1952, pp. 257-354; M. M. Postan, *The Trade of Medieval Europe: The North* in: *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, t. 2, Cambridge 1952, pp. 119-256.

22 J. Ptaśnik, *Miasta i mieszczaństwo w dawnej Polsce*, Kraków 1934, pp. 1-43.

23 H. Samsonowicz, *Północ - Południe*, Wrocław 1999. One has to stress, that Samsonowicz did not share the view, that this dichotomous division is proper. He put forward the view, that Europe should be perceived as a continent divided into three parts: East, West and South (ibidem, p. 58).

For Polish historiography of the twentieth century, the concepts of economic space invented by German-language historiography were important as points of reference. I mentioned some of them earlier. This was both a result of the great influence of German historiography on Polish historiography, among other things, but also, to no lesser extent, an indirect effect of the important role that Germans played in the economic history of Poland (and all of Central Europe) during the Middle Ages: a. in the rural colonization of Silesia, Greater Poland and Pomerania as village headmen and settlers; b. in the re-establishment larger cities and their development also in other regions of Poland, in the assumption of power there, in the taking control of trade and influence in the crafts; c. in the strictly connected proliferation of German law not only on account of the Germans' participation in colonization, but also because of its implementation by the Poles due to favorable regulations for the settlers; d. in the organization and development of mining in Silesia and Lesser Poland (Małopolska); and e. in the joining of the most important cities in the Polish lands (frequently outside the Polish duchies or the Kingdom of Poland) with the Hanseatic League.

And it was the idea of the Hanseatic zone, although the term "zone" was rarely used for the extent of the reach of the Hanseatic League, that proved particularly important. This idea was presented in two similar ways. The first was the quadrilateral zone, the corners of which were marked by the major Hanseatic outposts in Bruges, London, Norwegian Bergen, and Novgorod the Great.²⁴ This was an area of vital interest to the Hanseatic League. The second, on the other hand, was the outline defined by the geographically most distant member cities of the Hanseatic League at the peak of the organization's development, after 1370: the Dutch centers to the west,²⁵ then Visby, or perhaps even Stockholm, to the north,²⁶ Revel and Dorpat to the northeast,²⁷ and Krakow to the south.²⁸ This area is not fundamentally different from the territory defined by the main outposts of the German Hansa. The concept of the Hanseatic League, understood geographically as its area of operation and influence, still retains its usefulness today.

Another concept of the zone, this time in relation to the inland areas, was proposed by the outstanding Swiss economic historian Hektor

²⁴ Ph. Dollinger, *Die Hanse*, ed. V. Henn, N. Jörn, Stuttgart 2012 (6th ed.), pp. 124-135.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 157; see also: J. Weststrate, *Das Beste aus mehreren Welten. Die Bedeutung der Hanse für die östlichen Niederlande vom 14. bis 16. Jahrhundert*, in: *Am Rande der Hanse*, ed. K. Krüger, A. Ranft, S. Selzer, Trier 2012, p. 14. The Dutch historian is of the opinion that the range of the Hanseatic League westwards was larger at least before 1400.

²⁶ Ph. Dollinger, *Die Hanse...*, p. 164.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 163.

²⁸ J. Wyrozumski, *Kraków a Hanza w wiekach średnich*, in: idem, *Cracovia mediaevalis*, Kraków 2010, pp. 365-377.

Ammann. Even before the Second World War, he put forward the view that the traditional geographical concept of Upper (i.e., southern) Germany (*Oberdeutschland*) should be expanded and given an economic meaning.²⁹ The zone so understood would include the area from the Vosges Mountains to the southern Carpathian Mountains in Transylvania. It would thus include not only southern Germany, but also the duchy of Austria, Switzerland, as well as the kingdoms of Bohemia, and much of the Hungarian monarchy. Ammann cited the considerable influence of merchants and entrepreneurs from southern German cities (especially Nuremberg) in the area as justification for this proposal. Despite the consensus in historiography on the significant role of the Nurembergers in the economic life of this area, Ammann's proposal did not gain support among historians.

The downside of both conceptions of economic space as Hanseatic and Upper German is their colonial origins and perspective. Linked to it is the ignoring, especially in the past, of the importance of Central European decision-makers and legislators to the economic life of their home countries (rulers, secular and ecclesiastical magnates), as well as the non-German participants in it: Slavs and Hungarians (especially in agriculture), Jews, Italians, Armenians, and Walloons. The negative effects of the popularity of such one-sided depictions of the economic and social transformations of Central Europe and elsewhere can be seen in the works of well-known medievalists outside Germany. As an example, consider the colonialist account of these processes in Central Europe in the famous book by Robert Bartlett,³⁰ or the strange statement by the eminent Dutch historian Herman van der Wee, who summarized them thus: "German colonization in central, eastern, and northern Europe in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (...) had created attractive markets, which Venice had helped to develop and expand, in collaborations with merchants, entrepreneurs, and bankers of south German cities."³¹ The quoted view can hardly be considered accurate.³²

29 H. Ammann, *Die Diesbach-Watt-Gesellschaft. Ein Beitrag zur Handelsgeschichte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, St. Gallen 1928, p. 3.

30 R. Bartlett, *The Making of Europe. Conquest, colonization and cultural change (950-1350)*, Princeton 1994, passim.

31 H. van der Wee, *Structural changes in European long-distance trade, and particularly in the re-export trade from south to north (1350-1750)*, in: *The Rise of Merchants Empires. Long-distance Trade in the Early Modern World (1350-1750)*, ed. J.D. Tracy, Cambridge 1990, p. 21.

32 Van der Wee overestimated the importance of the Republic of Venice for Central-European countries, especially for Poland. True, Venice received large quantities of gold and silver from Bohemia and Hungary as well as copper from the latter country (see. F. C. Lane, *Venice. A Maritime Republic*, London-Baltimore 1973, pp. 148, 299; J. Janáček, *L'argent tchèque et la Méditerranée (XIVe et XVe siècles)*, in: *Histoire économique du monde méditerranéen 1450-1650. Mélanges en l'honneur de Fernand Braudel*, vol. 1, Toulouse 1973, p. 246; R. Zaoral, *Mining, Trading and Minting in Late Medieval Bohemia*, in: *From Ore to Money. Mining, Trading, Minting. Proceedings of the Tallinn*

In Polish economic historiography, as in many other countries, the dominant view was to identify economic space with political space. As an example, one can cite the syntheses of Polish history written by the leading specialist in this field, Jan Rutkowski (1886-1949),³³ both before the Second World War and later.³⁴ One could add many other examples, where the territorial scope of the area under study was identically defined.³⁵ The changing borders of Poland in the Middle Ages meant that the term "Poland" had various ranges, and therefore alternative terms were used. Thus, the official name "Kingdom of Poland" was used for the period after 1320, or the less precise "Polish lands", which gave researchers greater latitude in determining the territorial scope of their research. Generally included were the small duchies of Mazovia (gradually annexed to the Kingdom of Poland between 1462 and 1526), part of the Teutonic state, which until 1466 ruled, among other things, Chełmno land (from 1234-1235) and Eastern Pomerania (from 1309), somewhat less frequently Silesia, which from 1320s belonged to the Kingdom of Bohemia. Western Pomerania was much less frequently included in the "Polish lands", and if so, only until the second half of the twelfth century, when the region's dependence on Poland ceased.³⁶

Concepts of a different division of economic space did not emerge in Polish historiography until the 1960s and 1970s. Marian Małowist (1909-1988)³⁷

(2018) conference, ed. G. Depeyrot, I. Leimus, Wetteren 2018, p. 91). The Central-European merchants purchased oriental merchandise in Venice, but not only there. On the other hand, there were not many merchants and entrepreneurs from Venice in these three countries. In the fourteenth-century kingdoms of Bohemia and Hungary the Florentines prevailed (F. Graus, *Die Handelsbeziehungen Böhmen zu Deutschland und Österreich im 14. und zu Beginn des 15. Jahrhunderts*, "Historica" 2 (1960), p. 93; W. von Stromer, *Landmacht gegen Seemacht. Kaiser Sigismunds Kontinental Sperre gegen Venedig (1412-1433)*, "Zeitschrift für Historische Forschung" 22 (1995), 2, p. 148; P. Engel, *The Realm...*, pp. 248, 261), and in the Kingdom of Poland - from Genoa, and in fifteenth century - also from Florence (J. Ptaśnik, *Kultura włoska wieków średnich w Polsce*, Warszawa 1958, 2nd ed., pp. 18, 45-67, 72-85, 94, 104-105).

33 On Rutkowski: J. Topolski, *Jana Rutkowskiego życie i rola w rozwoju nauki historycznej*, in: J. Rutkowski, *Wokół teorii ustroju feudalnego. Prace historyczne*, selected and ed. J. Topolski, Warszawa 1982, pp. 5-68.

34 J. Rutkowski, *Zarys gospodarczych dziejów Polski w czasach przedrozbiorowych*, Poznań 1923; idem, *Histoire économique de la Pologne avant les Partages*, Paris-Varsovie 1927; idem, *Historia gospodarcza Polski*, Poznań 1947.

35 E.g., B. Zientara, A. Mączak, I. Ihnatowicz, Z. Landau, *Dzieje gospodarcze Polski do roku 1939*, Warszawa 1979; A. Jezierski, C. Leszczyńska, *Historia gospodarcza Polski*, Warszawa 1998; W. Morawski, *Dzieje gospodarcze Polski*, Warszawa 2010.

36 Recently, see: Z. Dalewski, *Pomerania in the politics of the 12th century*, in: *Europe reaches the Baltic. Poland and Pomerania in the Shaping of European Civilization (10th-12th centuries)*, ed. S. Rosik, Wrocław 2020, pp. 517-518.

37 The basic work on life and research of Marian Małowist, see: T. Siewierski, *Marian Małowist i krąg jego uczniów. Z dziejów historiografii gospodarczej w Polsce*, Warszawa 2016,

is considered the originator of the overall concept of dividing the economic space of East Central Europe. He finally presented it under the name "East" in his 1973 *magnum opus*.³⁸ However, his predilection for broad approaches and going beyond the borders of Poland was already demonstrated, perhaps under the influence of his tutor, Marceli Handelsman,³⁹ in his debut article in 1931.⁴⁰ By then he had noted the differences in the development of the southern Polish lands in comparison with the central and Baltic belts of the region,⁴¹ which could be seen as the beginning of later considerations of economic divisions on a broader scale. When he became fascinated with Marxism in the late 1940s and early 1950s, his earlier desire for a transnational and trans-regional view of history received a strong intellectual boost. Małowist's numerous monographs and articles dealt with Central Europe's ties to the Netherlands, Baltic trade, the fate of Genoese Caffè, and, in the 1960s, African states and European colonial expansion.⁴² It should also be noted that he formulated the main outlines of his innovative concept of the economic division of Central and East Europe even before 1973, *i.e.*, in two articles from 1965 and 1972.⁴³

Małowist's concept has already been described by his last students, K. Olendzki and Kąkolewski.⁴⁴ My reason for mentioning this is to show

particularly pp. 9-134. See also: H. Samsonowicz, *Mariana Małowista pisarstwo historyczne*, "Historyka" 20 (1990), pp. 51-56; I. Wallerstein, *Preface: Marian Małowist: An Appreciation*, in: *Western Europe, Eastern Europe and World Development 13th-18th Centuries. Collection of Essays of Marian Małowist*, ed. J. Batou, H. Szlajfer, Leiden-Boston 2010, pp. VII-IX; J. Batou, H. Szlajfer, *Introduction*. <I chased after Polish grain all over the world>, in: *ibidem*, pp. 1-11.

38 M. Małowist, *Wschód a Zachód Europy w XIII-XVI wieku. Konfrontacja struktur społeczno-gospodarczych*, Warszawa 1973, *passim*. Małowist used consequently the terms "East", "Eastern" afterwards, among others, in: *idem*, *The Trade of Eastern Europe in the Later Middle Ages*, in: *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*, ed. M.M. Postan, E. Miller, Cambridge 1987 (2nd ed.), pp. 525-612.

39 Suggested by A. Mączak in: *idem*, W. Tygielski, *Latem w Tocznieli*, Warszawa 2000, p. 128.

40 M. Małowist, *Le développement des rapports économiques entre la Flandre la Pologne et les pays limitrophes du XIII^e au XIV^e siècle*, "Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire" 10 (1931), 4, pp. 1013-1065. On this article: T. Siewierski, *Marian Małowist...*, pp. 128-134.

41 M. Małowist, *Le développement...*, p. 1037.

42 T. Siewierski, *Marian Małowist...*, pp. 95-134.

43 M. Małowist, *Uwagi o roli kapitału kupieckiego w Europie Wschodniej w późnym średniowieczu*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 56 (1965), 2, pp. 220-231, particularly p. 221; *idem*, *Górnictwo w średniowiecznej Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej jako element struktur społeczno-gospodarczych w XII-XV w.*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 53 (1972), 4, pp. 589-604. The former text in English: M. Małowist, *Some Remarks on the Role of Merchant Capital in Eastern Europe in the Late Middle Age*, in: *Western Europe...*, pp. 85-99.

44 K. Olendzki, I. Kąkolewski, *Strefa południka 20: Mit czy rzeczywistość? Wokół problematyki badań porównawczych Marian Małowista nad historią Europy Środkowowschodniej*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 81/1-2 (1990), pp. 301-311. In English: I. Kąkolewski, K. Olendzki, *The twentieth meridian*

the differences between it and the concepts of Małowist's older students, Henryk Samsonowicz and Antoni Mączak. I also find the conclusions drawn from a comparison of the content and chronology of their first article (1964) with the aforementioned texts of their erstwhile Tutor intriguing. In their article Samsonowicz and Mączak formulated the theory of the economic zone and equipped it with a descriptive definition: "(...) by <economic zone> we mean a set of regions whose economy depends on a common external factor. A common geographic basis is a prerequisite, and the economic nature of the zone and the variability of its borders with changes in the continental or world economy, of which the zone is a link follows from that definition. (...) External stimuli affect the various economic regions that are components of the zone in diverse ways, which also affects its variability in space. Some regions may fall out of the zone's framework, while others join in, drawn into the zone's market linkages. The existence of economic zones provides the premise for political and, above all, cultural ties."⁴⁵ Thus, the essence of a separate economic zone was its own resource-based economy linked by trading ties with some entity/entities outside its borders. The composition of the zone would change over the long term. According to both researchers, the Baltic zone was initially composed only of Scandinavia (with Norway), the southern Baltic coast and the region around Novgorod the Great.⁴⁶ Due to the increasing penetration of Hanseatic merchants, this zone was expanded: in the second half of the fourteenth century to include Mecklenburg and the state of Teutonic Order in Prussia, while from the end of the fourteenth century - Mazovia and part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, as well as the Kingdom of Poland.⁴⁷

Thus, it seems that H. Samsonowicz and A. Mączak were the first to take up the issue of economic zones (also from the theoretical side), although they acknowledged their preceptor's preference for treating the Baltic basin as a separate economic zone.⁴⁸ On the other hand, M. Małowist was the first to formulate a comprehensive concept of dividing the economic space of Central and Eastern Europe into large zones understood as Samsonowicz and Mączak defined them. Kąkolewski and Olendzki believed that Małowist was inspired by Braudel's great work of 1949, where in one section the French

zone: myth or reality? On Marian Małowist's studies on Central-East European history", "European Review of History: Revue européenne d'Histoire" 1 (1993), pp. 57-72.

⁴⁵ A. Mączak, H. Samsonowicz, *Z zagadnień genezy rynku europejskiego: strefa bałtycka*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 55 (1964), 2, p. 198. In French: iidem, *La zone baltique; l'un des éléments du marché européen*, "Acta Poloniae Historica" 11 (1965), p. 71.

⁴⁶ A. Mączak, H. Samsonowicz, *Z zagadnień...* p. 210; iidem, *La zone baltique...*, p. 86.

⁴⁷ A. Mączak, H. Samsonowicz, *Z zagadnień...*, p. 211; iidem, *La zone baltique...*, p. 87.

⁴⁸ A. Mączak, H. Samsonowicz, *Z zagadnień...*, pp. 200-201; iidem, *La zone baltique...*, p. 73. They mainly had in mind a 1954 monograph by M. Małowist *Studia z dziejów rzemiosła w zachodniej Europie w XIV i XV wieku*, Warszawa 1954. On this work see: T. Siewierski, *Marian Małowist...*, p. 117.

scholar distinguished four great belts of space (*les isthmes*) connecting the Mediterranean with the North.⁴⁹ Without questioning the validity of this statement, which both authors may have heard directly from Małowist during one of his seminars, it is necessary to note the big time distance between the publication of Braudel's work (1949) and Małowist's first article proposing an economic division of parts of the "East" (1965).

It is worth noting that this researcher used different names to describe the same zones. The first of these was the zone he referred to as the "Northern"⁵⁰ or much more frequently, but a little less justifiably, the "Baltic" zone. This is because it included not only the Baltic Sea region, but also the southern coast of the North Sea.⁵¹ Its axis was the waterways from Novgorod the Great to Bruges. One could say that the zone resembled in scope much of the Hanseatic zone, except that it did not include southern Norway, where one of the main Hanseatic outposts was located in Bergen.⁵² From the Baltic zone forest economy products (furs, hides and wax, timber, tar, pitch), fish, amber and (from Sweden) iron ore were shipped.⁵³

The second was the so-called "Central" zone, also called "Eastern European",⁵⁴ which included a belt of regions from the middle Oder River through Greater Poland (Wielkopolska), Mazovia, Lithuania (in the sense of a region, not a state), Belarus, and the lands of Rus (the Grand Duchy of Moscow). Its development was not uniform, as it occurred in Greater Poland as early as the thirteenth to the first half of the fourteenth century, while in other parts of the zone only in the fifteenth century and at the beginning of the modern period. Hence, Małowist assessed it as the latest developed zone. It is important to note a certain evolution in his approach to this zone. As I have already written, its idea was formulated and presented as early as 1965. However, in his 1973 *magnum opus*, its distinctiveness is presented less forcefully, and he presented the characteristics of this zone as part of an extensive section on the Baltic zone.⁵⁵ The central zone produced grain, hides and forestry products (wax, timber).

49 F. Braudel, *La Méditerranée...*, pp. 144-157. See: K. Olendzki, I. Kąkolewski, *Strefa południka 20...*, pp. 303-304; *idem*, *The twentieth meridian zone...*, pp. 60-61.

50 M. Małowist, *Uwagi...*, p. 225; *idem*, *Some remarks...*, p. 92; *idem*, *Wschód...*, pp. 41 ff.

51 *Idem*, *Wschód...*, p. 25.

52 On the Hanseatic outpost (*Kontor*) in Bergen see: C. Müller-Boysen, *Die <Deutsche Brücke> in Bergen und die Niederlassungen in Tönsberg und Oslo*, in: *Die Hanse. Lebenswirklichkeit und Mythos*, ed. J. Bracke, V. Henn, R. Postel, Lübeck 2004 (4th ed.), pp. 223-233.

53 M. Małowist, *Wschód...*, pp. 45, 48, 63, 64-65.

54 *Idem*, *Uwagi...*, pp. 222, 229; *idem*, *Some Remarks...*, pp. 87, 96 ("central region", "central area"); not adequate term "wschodnioeuropejska" ("East-European") was mentioned exclusively in the index in: *idem*, *Wschód...*, p. 414. However, in this work Małowist used the term "central zone" (*idem*, *Wschód...*, p. 98).

55 M. Małowist, *Wschód...*, pp. 30-31, see also: *ibidem*, pp. 5, 98-136.

The third segment of the economic division of Central and Eastern Europe became the "Sudeten-Carpathian" zone (also called "Southern",⁵⁶ "Carpathian"⁵⁷ or "Czech-Małopolska-Hungarian"⁵⁸ by Małowist), whose dominant feature was mining. It embraced the entire Kingdom of Bohemia, the Kingdom of Hungary, as well as Silesia and Lesser Poland. From the point of view of international trade, of most importance were: Hungarian silver, gold (to a lesser extent Silesian), copper, Czech silver, and Polish lead and salt,⁵⁹ although other non-mining goods were also exported from it. Precious metals and copper were exported and re-exported to Bruges,⁶⁰ among other places. However, from the second half of the thirteenth century onward - also to northern Italy (from Bohemia and Hungary).⁶¹ Of course, the pool of recipients for other minerals as well (copper, salt, and lead) was wider.

The fourth zone was the Western Balkan zone (Serbia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Western Bulgaria),⁶² whose assets also included metal ores: mainly silver and lead, to a lesser extent gold, as well as copper and iron.⁶³ Through merchants from the Republic of Dubrovnik, these were exported to Italian city-states, mainly to Venice, which needed precious metals for its constant and large issues of full-value gold and silver coins.

The last zone was described by Małowist as the Black Sea zone⁶⁴ (or "Black Sea-Caspian Sea zone").⁶⁵ It included the countries of the Black Sea basin including especially Moldavia and Wallachia, the Golden Horde, and the Genoese colonies headed by Caffa and Sudak.⁶⁶ Małowist, perhaps because of his earlier research on Caffa,⁶⁷ paid attention to the slave trade from this zone and access to the desirable goods of the Orient: silks and

56 Idem, *Uwagi...*, pp. 222, 228; idem, *Some remarks...*, pp. 87, 95 (as "southern region").

57 Idem, *Uwagi...*, p. 227; idem, *Some remarks...*, p. 94 (as "Carpathian region"); idem, *Wschód...*, p. 30.

58 Idem, *Wschód...*, p. 98.

59 Ibidem, pp. 25-26.

60 K. Bahr, *Handel und Verkehr der Deutschen Hanse in Flandern während des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig 1911, pp. 124, 127, 130; M. Małowist, *Le développement...*, pp. 1020-1021; R. Zaoral, *Mining...*, p. 79.

61 See footnote 32.

62 M. Małowist, *Górnictwo...*, pp. 599-602.

63 Idem, *Wschód...*, p. 26.

64 Ibidem, pp. 29, 30, 86, 169, 172, 216.

65 Ibidem..., pp. 30.

66 On these two cities, see recently: R. Hryszko, *Z Genui nad Morze Czarne. Z kart genueńskiej obecności gospodarczej na północno-zachodnich wybrzeżach Morza Czarnego u schyłku średniowiecza*, Kraków 2004, pp. 80-89, 91-93.

67 M. Małowist, *Kaffa - kolonia genueńska na Krymie i problem wschodni w latach 1453-1475*, Warszawa 1947; see the English summary of this monograph: *Kaffa. The Genoese Colony in the Crimea and the Eastern Question (1453-1475)*, in: *Western Europe...*, pp. 101-132. On this book by Małowist, see: T. Siewierski, *Marian Małowist...*, pp. 101-104.

spices,⁶⁸ medicinal herbs like senna, but also saffron, which was not just a culinary dye, but also an “energizer” and aphrodisiac⁶⁹).

It is worth noting, however, that Małowist devoted very little space to it in his 1973 work, in contrast to the zones discussed in detail: the “Northern” and “Sudeten-Carpathian”, but also the latest economically developed (except for Greater Poland) “Central” zone. Earlier he also pointed out the importance of local products in the Black Sea-Caspian Sea zone: grain, salt, furs, wax, and fish.⁷⁰

However, a second question arises - what, then, were the differences between Małowist, and his two younger colleagues, regarding the division of the economic space of East Central Europe? Comparing Samsonowicz and Mączak’s 1964 article on the Baltic zone with Małowist’s work, a different treatment of the northern zone is evident. Samsonowicz and Mączak presented the dynamics of its expansion and clearly described it as “Baltic”. Both of Małowist’s students did not adopt three of his theses:

- they did not accept his concept of a separate “Central” zone; Samsonowicz and Mączak already included Mazovia and “Poland,” *i.e.*, also Greater Poland in Baltic zone, in their 1964 article - but only from the end of fourteenth century,⁷¹ which is somewhat surprising;⁷²
- they did not include the southern coast of the North Sea in the Baltic zone;
- they did, however, include Norway, which, although located on the North Sea, was within the operation of the Baltic (Hanseatic) trade.

In later years, the issue of dividing the economic space of Central and Eastern Europe returned in a joint text published by Samsonowicz and

68 M. Małowist, *Wschód...*, p. 28.

69 See: W. von Stromer, *Handel zum Schwarzen Meer des Gesellschaft Clemens von Cadan, Johannes Zindrich und Nikolaus Zornberg von Breslau und Lemberg*, in: *Oriente e Occidente tra Medioevo ed Età Moderna. Studi in onore di Geo Pistarino*, ed. L. Balletto, Genova 1997, p. 1186.

70 M. Małowist, *Uwagi...*, p. 225; idem, *Some remarks...*, p. 91.

71 It is worth noting, that earlier Samsonowicz discovered in primary sources an export of Greater Poland’s cereal to Gdańsk (H. Samsonowicz, *Handel zagraniczny Gdańska w drugiej połowie XV wieku (rejonizacja handlu na podstawie ksiąg cła palowego)*, “Przegląd Historyczny” 47 (1956), 2, p. 344.

72 The earlier economic contacts between Greater Poland and Baltic zone were discovered prior to 1964: H. Lesiński, *Kontakty handlowe Wielkopolski z Pomorzem Zachodnim w XIV-XV wieku*, “Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Wielkopolski i Pomorza” 4 (1958), pp. 49-73; R. Marciniak, *Miasto biskupie (1255-1534)*, in: *Dzieje Kołobrzegu (X-XX wiek)*, ed. H. Lesiński, Poznań-Słupsk 1965, pp. 34-35; A. Wielopolski, *Z przeszłości handlu Odrą, Szczecin*, (1960), 4-5, p. 7. The research results after 1964 confirmed these links, see: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1, ed. E. Cieślak, Gdańsk 1985 (2nd ed.), p. 177; L. Leciejewicz, M. Rębkowski, *Uwagi końcowe. Początki Kołobrzegu w świetle rozpoznania archeologicznego*, in: *Kołobrzeg. Wczesne miasto nad Bałtykiem*, ed. iidem, Warszawa 2007, p. 301.

Mączak in 1985,⁷³ as well as in publications by only the former historian from 2000-2004.⁷⁴

A somewhat alternative concept to Małowist's was expressed by the two authors in their 1985 comprehensive text on the economy of "Eastern" Europe. While sharing their preceptor's concept in principle (except for what they had previously differed on the Northern/Baltic zone), they made a few modifications. They considered the extent of the Sudeten-Carpathian zone to be larger than Małowist had assumed. According to Samsonowicz and Mączak, Moldavia and Podolia also belonged to it, "which were closely connected with the Carpathian economy."⁷⁵ As for the Black Sea zone, they underlined that its main asset from the point of view of its own resources and European markets was cattle breeding and their export,⁷⁶ rather than the slave trade, important mainly from the point of view of the interests of the Republic of Genoa.⁷⁷ However, the most important novelty was the separation of the Russian zone, whose main export commodity was furs.⁷⁸ It could be considered that this did not include Novgorod the Great, which they had already included in the Baltic zone. In a comprehensive article in 2000, Samsonowicz added that the Russian zone was linked to the Asian market,⁷⁹ and only in 2012 did he clarify that its main centers were Moscow and Tver.⁸⁰ It would thus refer to the territory of the duchies of Moscow and Tver. The idea of separating the Russian zone was an indirect result of the earlier reasoning, according to which, among other things, Greater Poland, Mazovia, and the Lithuanian state were assigned to the Baltic zone,⁸¹ and were not elements of a separate zone, as Małowist believed.

73 H. Samsonowicz, A. Mączak, *Feudalism and Capitalism: a balance of changes in East-Central Europe*, in: *East-Central Europe in transition. From the fourteenth to the seventeenth century*, ed. A. Mączak, H. Samsonowicz, P. Burke, Cambridge 1985, pp. 6-23.

74 H. Samsonowicz, *Gospodarka średniowiecznej Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, in: *Historia Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, vol. 2, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Lublin 2000, pp. 14-31. The French version is: idem, *L'économie de l'Europe du Centre-Est du Haut Moyen Âge au XVIe siècle*, in: *Histoire de l'Europe du Centre-Est*, ed. J. Kłoczowski, Paris 2004, pp. 621-641.

75 H. Samsonowicz, A. Mączak, *Feudalism...*, p. 7. It is worth noting, that Samsonowicz put forward this view previously in 1978, but he did not justify it (idem, *Relations commerciales Polono-Italiennes dans le bas Moyen Âge*, in: *Studi in memoria di Federico Melis*, vol. 2, Roma 1978, p. 291).

76 H. Samsonowicz, A. Mączak, *Feudalism...*, p. 7. W kwestii eksportu bydła wciąż unmatched is: F. Lutge, *Strukturwandlungen im ostdeutschen und osteuropäischen Fernhandel des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-Historische Klasse. Sitzungberichte, München 1964, pp. 5-57.

77 See recently: D. Quirini-Popławska, *Włoski handel czarnomorskimi niewolnikami w późnym średniowieczu*, Kraków 2003.

78 H. Samsonowicz, A. Mączak, *Feudalism...*, p. 7.

79 H. Samsonowicz, *Gospodarka...*, p. 21; idem, *L'économie...*, p. 629.

80 Idem, *Nieznane dzieje Polski. W Europie czy na jej skraju?*, Warszawa 2012, pp. 128-129.

81 On Lithuania see: idem, *Handel Litwy z Zachodem w XV wieku*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 90 (1999), 4, pp. 453-458.

As can be seen, Małowist, Samsonowicz and Mączak used the dichotomy of East and West to define the area of their research, taking, however, not the Elbe, but the Oder as the western border of the "East", *i.e.*, Central and Eastern Europe. They excluded from their considerations the countries of East Germany, although Małowist included, let us recall, the southern coast of the North Sea, *i.e.*, also part of western Germany. Their concepts differ fundamentally from those of German historiography. First, the territorial perspective of Polish historians was much broader with regard to East Central and Eastern Europe than that of their German-speaking colleagues. If one were to consider that, for the latter, the area of interest was, on the whole, the Hanseatic zone, and the "Upper German" zone (as Ammann understood it), then one might conclude that they did not include the vast territory of the duchies of Moscow and Tver. This is somewhat surprising, since in the late Middle Ages German merchants were also active in Moscow⁸² (presumably Hanseats). Secondly, there is a different starting point for carrying out the division of Central and Eastern Europe. Polish historians started from the geographical conditions and economic peculiarities of the various regions and countries of Central and Eastern Europe. They took as their point of departure the local raw materials and the products of the secondary sector (*i.e.*, mining, metallurgy), which played an important part in the long-distance trade (that was mainly carried out by German merchants). Consequently, Polish historians divided it into several different economic zones compared to the two proposed by German-language historiography.

The Polish concepts of the division of the space of Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages and early modern times discussed here were the culmination of the splendid development of Polish economic medieval studies in the post-war period. They also became (more often in Małowist's version) a reference point for later research. However, with the exception of the aforementioned comprehensive texts, they were not used for a long time in the research of subsequent generations of Polish scholars of medieval and early modern economy. This long-term lack of resonance is to be explained by the gradual decline of Polish economic studies, which began to appear from the late 1970s onward.⁸³ This resulted from several causes. In Polish historiography, there was a weariness with the preponderance of economic history and, being an aftermath of the politically privileged Marxism, an almost compulsory finding of the economic dimension of the studied phenomena in every field. A partial demarxisation of historical studies began

⁸² N. Tikhomirov, *Drevnaâ Moskva (XIII-XV v.)*, Moskva 1948, pp. 104, 106.

⁸³ See: A.F. Grabski, *Zarys historii historiografii polskiej*, Poznań 2000, pp. 208, 219-222; J. Kochanowicz, A. Sosnowska, *Historia gospodarcza Polski przedrozbiorowej - porzucone terytorium?*, "Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych" 71 (2011), pp. 14-21.

after the end of Stalinism in 1956 and was intensified by the partial liberalization of societal life in the 1970s.⁸⁴ Other research topics became popular in Polish historiography. In addition, most of M. Małowist's students at the time focused on different issues than those of their elder colleague and preceptor.⁸⁵ Samsonowicz, who constantly broadened the perspective of his research, constituted an exception to this rule since he was a researcher who never completely abandoned economic history.⁸⁶

The first serious attempt to use, but also to verify, among other things, the concept of the economic division of East Central (rather, Central) Europe came about thirty years after the publication of Małowist's *magnum opus*. The work in question was a collective work edited by S. Gawlas, where the focus was on the Polish lands in the broadest sense.⁸⁷ The idea of the work was to answer the question of their contribution to the development of "Old Europe". For various reasons, the bulk of the book was concerned with economic issues. Not only were the ideas of Małowist and his followers used here, but the division of Europe into West and "the East", which he also used, was also referred to. Another of Małowist's students, M. Dygo, also viewed economic issues in these terms. In the 2006 work cited here, Dygo published a lengthy text in which he described and characterized both the academic discussion and the transformation of the economies of Western and Central Europe, which he then compared.⁸⁸ The theory of zones by Małowist, Samsonowicz, and Mączak was used by two other authors of this study. R. Czaja undertook a fresh look at the economy of the Baltic zone and its relations with "Old Europe".⁸⁹ In his considerations, he focused on East Pomerania and, in the thirteenth-the mid-fifteenth centuries, on the area of the Teutonic Order state in Prussia.⁹⁰ In contrast, G. Myśliwski focused on the trade of the Sudeten-Carpathian zone.⁹¹ However, he expanded the spectrum of research to include Lwów and Red Ruthenia because of the link of this region with Lesser Poland and Silesia (the crucial *Hohe Strasse* route, called

84 R. Stobiecki, *Historiografia PRL*, Łódź 2022, pp. 79-83, 112, 115, 150-151, 158.

85 M. Tymowski, *Czy w historiografii polskiej istnieje <szkoła Małowista>?*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 124 (2017), 1, pp. 79-118.

86 G. Myśliwski, *Bałtycka strefa gospodarcza w badaniach Henryka Samsonowicza*, "Zapiski Historyczne" 87 (2022), 4, pp. 45, 53, 55.

87 *Ziemie polskie wobec Zachodu. Studia nad rozwojem średniowiecznej Europy*, ed. S. Gawlas, Warszawa 2006. On the idea of this book see: idem, *Introduction* in: ibidem, pp. 432-434, 437.

88 M. Dygo, *Wschód i Zachód: gospodarka Europy w XIV-XV wieku*, in: *Ziemie polskie...*, pp. 117-194.

89 R. Czaja, *Strefa bałtycka w gospodarce europejskiej w XIII-XV wieku ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem Prus Krzyżackich*, in: ibidem, pp. 195-245.

90 See: ibidem, p. 197.

91 G. Myśliwski, *Strefa sudecko-karpacka i Lwów. Miejsce Śląska, Małopolski i Rusi Czerwonej w gospodarce Europy Zachodniej (połowa XIII-początek XVI wieku)*, in: ibidem, pp. 247-319.

also *via regia*)⁹² and the close trade contacts between the centres of these three neighbouring regions. This historian used the concepts and inspiration of Małowist, Samsonowicz, and Mączak a few years later in his monograph on the trade of Wrocław in the later Middle Ages.⁹³ Thus, he postulated that Volodymyr and Lviv, along with almost all of today's Ukraine, should be considered a part of the Black Sea economic zone because of trade contacts with Crimean peninsula. He considered that Bulgaria and the southern coasts of this basin (*i.e.*, the northern territories of the Byzantine Empire including Constantinople) should be included in the Black Sea zone. He also expressed the view that the boundaries of the Sudeten-Carpathian zone should be moved to the western edge of Red Ruthenia with Zhydachiv and Drohobych (in present-day Ukraine), where salt was extracted. He also shared Małowist's view that not the entire Kingdom of Hungary belonged to the Sudeten-Carpathian zone (as Samsonowicz believed), but the border between this zone and the Black Sea zone ran through it, forming a common area (Transylvania).

The study of the divisions of the economic space of Central and Eastern Europe from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries is still a point of reference for historians of the economic history of this part of our continent. One can also ask a question about the prospects of research on the divisions of the economic space of Central and Eastern Europe, since not everything has been definitively established. What is apparent here is the dilemma of where exactly the boundaries between them ran, and when and how they changed. So far, only in the case of the Baltic economic zone has this problem been thoroughly solved.⁹⁴ Future studies of the economy on a local and regional scale can contribute to this - conducted, however, with a far broader perspective than is generally done.

ABSTRACT

The articles deals with historico-economic studies by Polish historians as M. Małowist, H. Samsonowicz and A. Mączak, who undertook a task of reconstructing an economic

92 W. Kehn, *Der Handel im Oderraum im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert*, Köln-Graz 1968, p. 10; H. Weczerka, *Die Südostbeziehungen der Hanse*, in: *Die Hanse und der deutsche Osten*, ed. N. Angermann, Lüneburg 1990, p. 117.

93 G. Myśliwski, *Wrocław w przestrzeni gospodarczej Europy (XIII-XV wiek). Centrum czy peryferie?*, Wrocław 2009, pp. 55-73.

94 H. Samsonowicz, *Przemiany strefy bałtyckiej w XIII-XVI wieku*, „Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych” 37 (1976), pp. 47-61.

division of East-Central and Eastern Europe between the thirteenth and the sixteenth century. A history of their studies as well as analysis of similarities and differences between their results were described. Their research is treated as an intellectual response to the earlier formulated conceptions of economic divisions of whole Europe or its German-Slavic part. Polish historians formulated an original conception of the economy-based division of vast area between the Germany and Ural mountains.

Keywords: pre-industrial economy, economic historiography, High and Late Middle Ages, early modern period, East-Central Europe, Eastern Europe-Germany

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THE HANSEATIC ZONE AS SEEN IN GDAŃSK FROM THE 14TH TO EARLY 16TH CENTURIES



When considering the issue of the perception of the Hanseatic zone in Gdańsk from the 14th to early 16th century, one can refer to various perspectives that allow to show the general circumstances in which the life of the city and its inhabitants took place during this period. In the case of the Hanseatic zone and the cities belonging to the Hanseatic League, the first dimension of its extent are the terms of trade, *i.e.*, the general framework of east-west economic contacts and the participation of representatives of individual cities.¹ The "zone" here describes the economic and social unity of human activity and organisation, with large cities being its distinguishing and defining factor (Robert E. Dickinson, Josiah Cox Russell).²

A second dimension of the perception of the Hanseatic zone are the personal relationships of the inhabitants resulting from the process of settlement of the population (including merchants) from the North of Germany (a part

1 For a general understanding of the concept and extent of the Baltic zone *cf.* H. Samsonowicz, *Późne średniowiecze miast nadbałtyckich*, Warszawa 1968; M. Małowist, *Wschód a Zachód Europy w XIII-XVI wieku. Konfrontacja struktur społeczno-gospodarczych*, Warszawa 1973, pp. 41-138; R. Czaja, *Strefa bałtycka w gospodarce europejskiej*, in: *Ziemie polskie wobec Zachodu. Studia nad rozwojem średniowiecznej Europy*, ed. S. Gawlas, Warszawa 2006, pp. 195-245; H. Samsonowicz, *The Baltic Zone: Homogeneous or Diversified?*, "Acta Poloniae Historica" 96 (2007), pp. 5-21.

2 R.E. Dickinson, *The West European Cities*, London 1962; J.C. Russell, *Medieval Regions and their Cities*, Newton Abbot 1972, p. 15. In the context of Gdańsk, *cf.* H. Samsonowicz, *Miejsce Gdańska w gospodarce europejskiej w XV w.*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 2: 1454-1655, ed. E. Cieślak, Gdańsk 1982, pp. 80-81.

of the Holy Roman Empire) in the port cities of the Baltic Sea. These people were looking for a chance for a better life, and a chance to develop their economic ventures. A part of this process was the migration of the German population settling in the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia - including craftsmen and merchants arriving in the area's major urban and port centres such as Gdańsk.³ The third dimension are contacts related to the interests of the richest city dwellers (merchants and members of the power elite - such as councillors and jurors), which they often served through the official representation of the ruling group of the city, *i.e.*, the city council.⁴ The fourth dimension, on the other hand, is the personal perspective of the merchants and burghers, reflected in their trade books (Johan Pyre)⁵ which have sometimes been expanded with numerous notes of a historical and personal nature (Jacob Lubbe, Caspar Weinreich, Christoph Beyer, Bernt Stegmann).⁶ However, the literature on historiographical sources produced in the Hanseatic zone emphasises that the chroniclers focused on the life of their own city. Important events from other Hanseatic cities were mentioned only occasionally. The pan-Hanseatic perspective was rare, although general political relations and wars, which had a direct impact on trade relations, were described.⁷

Importantly, the possibility of showing the similarities and possible differences in the perception of the Hanseatic zone from each of these four perspectives depends not solely on the state of preservation of the sources. Just as crucial is the very way of recording the phenomena, which were often long-lasting processes in which periods of stabilisation and development intertwined with times of strong turbulence and crisis. The latter resulted not only from local factors (*e.g.*, armed conflicts in the Hanseatic zone or the city's economic hinterland), but also from external factors, such as the economic

3 H. Samsonowicz, *Geografia powiązań rodzinnych patrycjatu gdańskiego w średniowieczu*, in: *Venerabiles, Nobiles et Honesti. Studia z dziejów społeczeństwa Polski średniowiecznej*, ed. A. Radzimiński, A. Supruniuk, J. Wroniszewski, Toruń 1997, pp. 319-325; R. Czaja, *Regionale und hansische Identität des preußischen Bürgertums*, in: *Die Rolle der Stadtgemeinden und bürgerlichen Genossenschaften im Hanseraum in der Entwicklung und Vermittlung des gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Gedankengutes im Spätmittelalter*, ed. J. Tandecki, Toruń 2000, pp. 91-101.

4 On defining ruling groups in Hanseatic cities *cf.* R. Czaja, *Grupy rządzące w miastach nadbałtyckich w średniowieczu*, Toruń 2008, pp. 16-25.

5 The extent of this merchant's business dealings, based on his surviving trade book, was developed in her work by A.P. Orłowska, *Johan Pyre. Ein Kaufmann und sein Handelsbuch im spätmittelalterlichen Danzig. Darstellung*, Wien-Köln-Weimar 2022, pp. 100-107, 261-346.

6 On the chronicle records of these individuals *cf.* J. Możdżeń, *Zapiski z ksiąg handlowych jako świadectwa życia gdańskich kramarzy na przełomie XV i XVI wieku*, "Zapiski Historyczne" 78 (2013), 3, pp. 67-92; J. Możdżeń, *Przedstawianie świata przez kronikarzy gdańskich na przełomie XV i XVI wieku*, Toruń 2016 (= *Roczniki TNT* 95/2), pp. 24, 53-91.

7 H. Schmiedt, *Die deutschen Städtechroniken als Spiegel des bürgerlichen Selbstverständnisses im Spätmittelalter*, Göttingen 1958, pp. 101-111.

crisis caused by the demographic catastrophe of the Black Death in the middle of the 14th century, or the changes in the balance of power that took place in the first half of the 15th century. In the 13th and 14th centuries, the Hanseatic League made successful efforts to gain a dominant position on the Baltic Sea by monopolising east-west trade. The status of the only commercial intermediary in north-eastern Europe, between mainly raw material states in the east: Prussia, Livonia, Novgorod the Great, and, above all, centres of craft production and cloth in the Netherlands and England, was to provide its participants with a great income.⁸ However, the results achieved in this area did not prove sustainable. The increase in the importance of the states of the Kalmar Union (1397) and the Polish-Lithuanian state, the weakening of the Teutonic Order's power in Prussia, and the Dutch and English expansion in the Hanseatic zone were signs of the changing times and essentially broke the monopoly of the Hanseatic League in the 15th century.

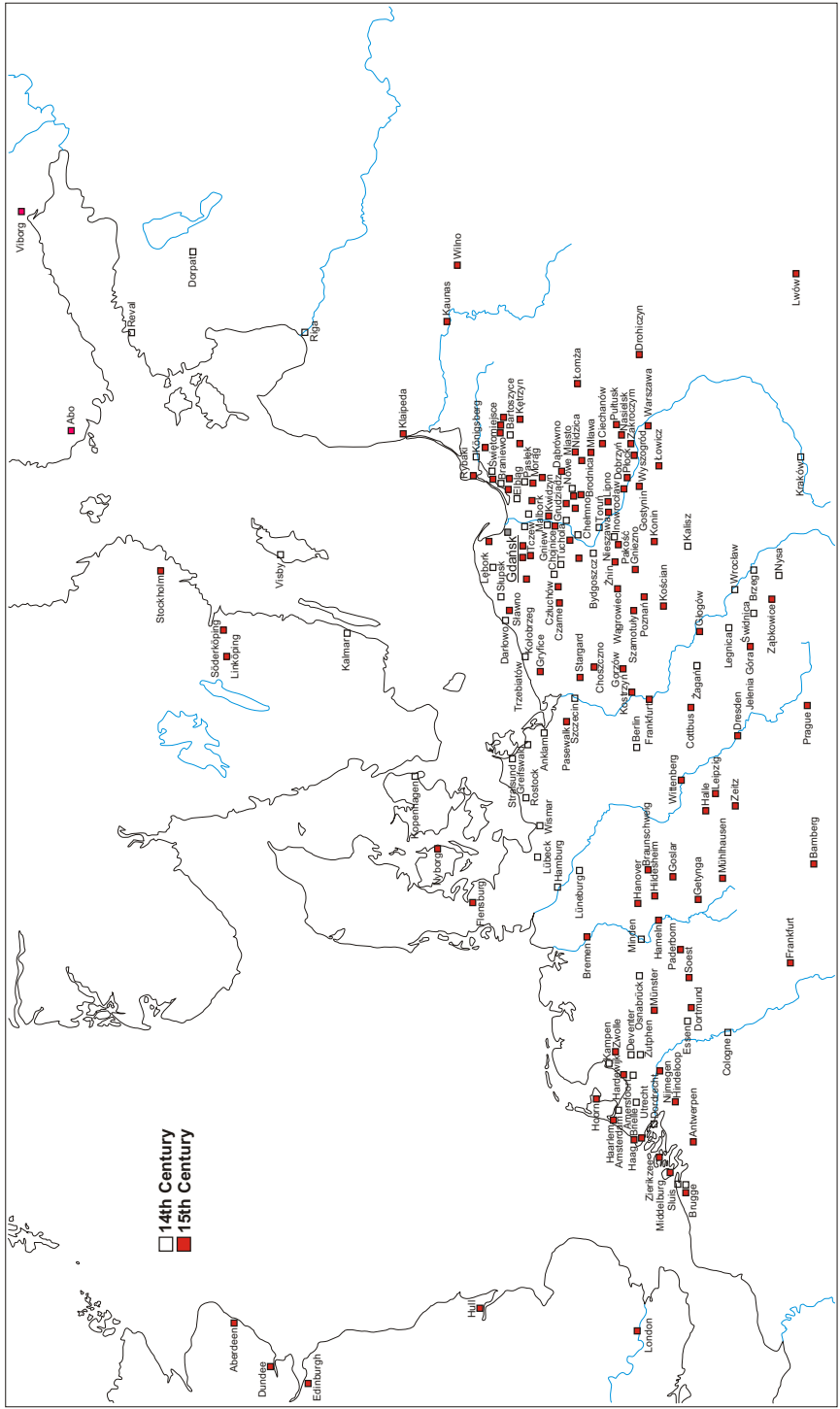
1. GDAŃSK IN THE HANSEATIC ZONE FROM THE 14TH TO THE EARLY 16TH CENTURIES IN THE LIGHT OF THE CORRESPONDENCE

In order to show the real extent of Gdańsk's contacts in the fourteenth century and the role played by the Hanseatic Zone in it, one should primarily refer to the sources created by the city's ruling groups, *i.e.*, to the surviving correspondence with other urban centres. From the perspective of Gdańsk, the scale of contacts with individual cities is indirectly shown by the number of letters and documents addressed to them by the city council.⁹ In the fourteenth century, this is mainly correspondence sent to Gdańsk, as the exact number and geographical reach of the letters sent by the city authorities is not known.¹⁰ On the basis of this data, consisting

8 H. Samsonowicz, *Późne średniowiecze miast nadbałtyckich. Studia nad dziejami Hanzy nad Bałtykiem w XIV-XV w.*, Warszawa 1968, pp. 109-144; P. Dollinger, *La Hanse (XII^e-XVII^e siècles)*, Paris 1970 (Polish edition: *Dzieje Hanzy: XII-XVII w.*, Gdańsk 1975); J. Schildhauer, *Die Hanse: Geschichte und Kultur*, Stuttgart 1984 (Polish edition: J. Schildhauer, *Dzieje i kultura Hanzy*, Warszawa 1995).

9 On the transmission of correspondence between cities, cf. H.-D. Heimann, *Räume und Routen in der Mitte Europas. Kommunikationspraxis und Raumerfassung*, in: *Raumerfassung und Raumbewusstsein im späten Mittelalter*, ed. P. Moraw, Stuttgart 2002 (= *Vorträge und Forschungen* 49), pp. 203-231; R. Czaja, *Korrespondenz der preußischen Städte und des preußischen Bürgertums als Selbstzeugnis und Kommunikationsmedium im Spätmittelalter*, in: *Kommunikation mit dem Ich. Signaturen der Selbstzeugnisforschung an europäischen Beispielen des 12. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*, ed. H.-D. Heimann, P. Monnet, Bochum 2004; R. Czaja, *Przenoszenie listów między miastami hanzeatyckimi w strefie bałtyckiej w XIV-XV wieku*, "KLIO. Czasopismo poświęcone dziejom Polski i powszechnym" 23 (2012) 4, pp. 7-24.

10 This compilation could be further supplemented by references contained in the oldest city books of Gdańsk (Stadtbuch No. 1 and Stadtbuch No. 2). They included registers of letters



of a total of 191 documents and letters from a total of 45 towns, it is possible to reconstruct an approximate geographical horizon of Gdańsk's contacts in the second half of the 14th century. It should be noted, however, that in the case of as many as 27 towns, there was only one letter or document. Most were sent from Toruń (30), Lübeck (29), Elbląg (28), and Stralsund (20), followed by the Hanseatic exchange offices (*Kontor*) in Bruges (11) and Königsberg (9).¹¹

At the time, Gdańsk's contacts were definitely dominated by the Vendish (Lübeck, Rostock, Stralsund) and Prussian cities. Contacts with several centres in Pomerania and Livonia were also noted. In the 15th century, the number of urban centres from which letters were sent increased by 104. Most came from Poland (25), the Empire (22), Prussia (16), Flanders and the Netherlands (12),¹² Royal Prussia (10), Sweden (5), England and Scotland (5 in total), as well as Lithuania and Denmark (2 each). Particularly evident is the intensification of contacts with cities in the Kingdom of Poland,¹³ but also with cities in the northern part of the Empire which were members of the Hanseatic League.

Importantly, the analyses concerning the fifteenth century are easier to conduct, since by then, special books of sent letters were established

of recommendation issued by the council of the Main City of Gdańsk in matters of property and trade, which were intended to be presented in other urban centres, State Archive in Gdańsk (hereafter: APG), The records of the city of Gdańsk, 300,59/2; 300,59/3. Among others, the following were listed: in 1388: Deventer, in 1389: Sławno, Bartoszyce, Hel, Rostock, Elbląg, Ziębice, in 1390: Bornholm, Wrocław, Riga, and in 1391: Szczecin, London, Dordrecht, and Kampen, 300,59/2, pp. 241-246. This issue requires further research. A description of the contents of both books is provided by M. Grulkowski, *Najstarsze księgi miejskie głównego miasta Gdańska z XIV i początku XV wieku. Studium kodykologiczne*, Warszawa 2015 (= *Studia i materiały do dziejów kancelarii w Gdańsku* 1), pp. 307, 309, 313-329, 336-356.

11 In addition, more than one document pertained to the following cities: Chełmno (4), Rostock (3), Wismar (3), Darłowo (3), Kołobrzeg (2), Lębork (2), Tczew (2), Grudziądz (2), Malbork (2) and Bydgoszcz (2).

12 On Gdańsk's trade contacts with merchants from the Netherlands cf. R. Czaja, C. Kardasz, *Kontakte der Danziger Stadtbürger mit niederländischen Kaufleuten und Schiffen in der 1. Hälfte des 15. Jahrhunderts*, in: *Von Hamburg nach Java. Studien zur mittelalterlichen, neuen und digitalen Geschichte. Festschrift zu Ehren von Jürgen Sarnowsky*, ed. J. Burgtorf, Ch. Hoffarth, S. Kubon, Göttingen 2020, pp. 159-196.

13 In this context, let us add that the economic contacts of Gdańsk with the cities of the Kingdom of Poland in the first half of the 15th century are also evident in the records found in the jury books of the Main City of Gdańsk from the years 1426-1448, State Archive in Gdańsk (hereafter: APG), The records of the city of Gdańsk, jury books, 300, 43/1a; APG, 300, 43/1b. Data on the export of timber and forest products from Gdańsk in the 15th century, including those from the Mazovian area, based on contracts (from the years 1426-1439 and 1466-1475) contained in the Gdańsk jury books, were collated by C. Kardasz, *Der Export von Holz und Waldwaren aus dem südlichen Ostseeraum im Spätmittelalter*, in: *Märkte, Messen und Waren im hansischen Handel*, ed. R. Holbach, J. Sarnowsky, Wismar 2021, pp. 215-225.

in the office of the city council of Gdańsk, in which copies of the correspondence began to be entered. They were called the books of missives (*Libri Missivarum*).¹⁴ Closer research revealed that, unfortunately, not all urban correspondence sent was recorded. Based on the surviving books from 1420-1508 (no data from 1471-1488), it is known that the city of Gdańsk sent a total of at least 2809 letters to over 120 cities. Most of these went to Lübeck, the organisational centre of the Hanseatic League, with 325 letters sent there, 108 to the Hanseatic *Kontor* authorities and private individuals in Bruges, 67 to Stralsund, 48 to Słupsk, 44 to Hamburg, 40 to Toruń, and 36 to Rostock.¹⁵

Table 1. Number of letters to selected urban centres recorded in the missive books (*Libri Missivarum*)

Missives book	All letters	Letters to						
		Lübeck	Bruges (Kontor)	Stralsund	Słupsk	Hamburg	Toruń	Rostock
Vol. 1 (1420–1430)	221	23	6	13	0	2	5	6
Vol. 2 (1431–1438)	354	37	34	10	3	2	7	5
Vol. 3 (1424–1449)	194	1	0	1	1	0	0	0
Vol. 4 (1440–1448)	535	39	28	18	16	7	6	8
Vol. 5 (1448–1454)	540	55	12	5	8	7	5	5
Vol. 6 (1455–1470)	572	102	20	16	20	17	8	9
Vol. 7 (1489–1508)	393	68	8	4	0	9	9	3
Total number of letters	2809	325	108	67	48	44	40	36

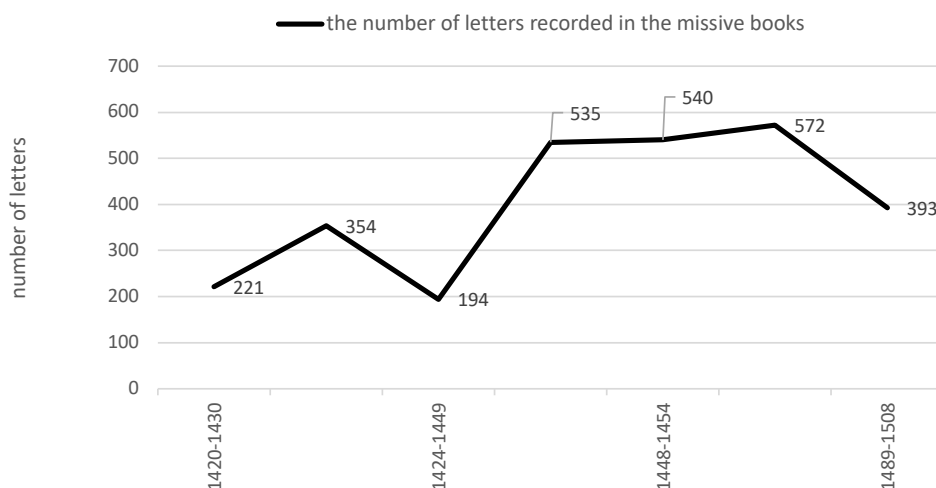
Source: H. Barth, *Zur Danziger mitteldeutschen Kanzleisprache*, Danzig 1938, pp. 18-31.

Note that the number of cities to which correspondence was sent increased only slightly after 1454. In the second half of the fifteenth century, only 15 new centres were added, mostly in Flanders, the Netherlands, and Pomerania, although the total amount of correspondence sent per year recorded in the missive books increased (Chart 1).

¹⁴ M. Sławoszewska, *Gdańskie "Missiva", "Archeion"* 29 (1958), pp. 199-207; J. Tandecki, *Średniowieczne księgi wielkich miast pruskich jako źródła historyczne i zabytki kultury mieszczańskiej (organizacja władz, zachowane archiwalia, działalność kancelarii)*, Warszawa-Toruń 1990, pp. 140-142.

¹⁵ H. Barth, *Zur Danziger mitteldeutschen Kanzleisprache*, Danzig 1938, pp. 18-31.

Chart 1. Numbers of letters recorded in the missive books between 1420 and 1508



Source: H. Barth, *Zur Danziger mitteldeutschen Kanzleisprache*, Danzig 1938, pp. 18-31.

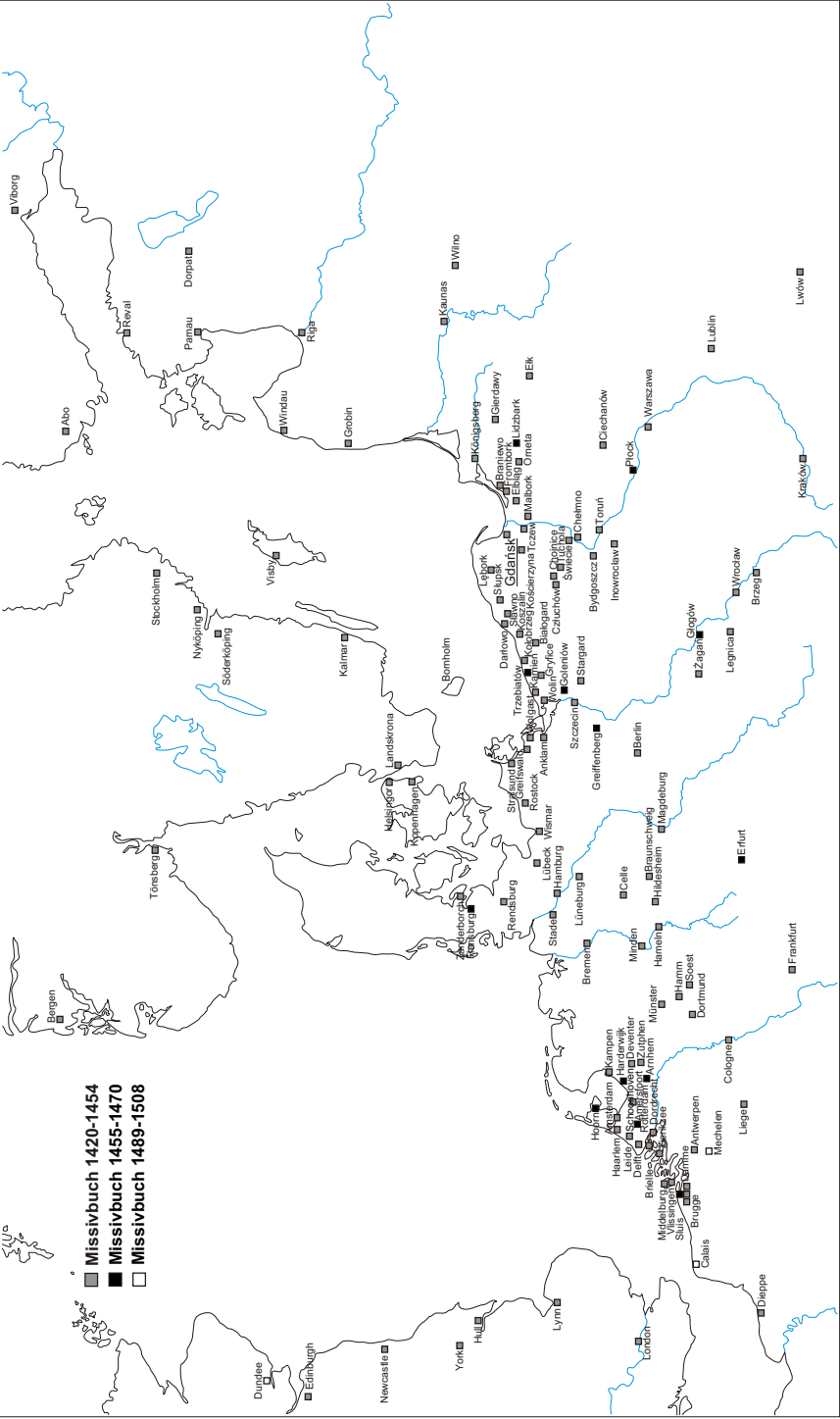
Of course, the flow of correspondence was also influenced by the organisation of the letter exchange itself. For this purpose, the city council employed special messengers to take the letters to various places. The remuneration they received was influenced by the distance they travelled. Accurate data from Elbląg shows that for covering the route to Toruń (170 km), the messenger received 12 scots¹⁶, to Königsberg (100 km) - 8 scots, to Gdańsk (about 60 km) - 6 scots, and to Braniewo (about 45 km) - only 4 scots.¹⁷ Surviving sources show that between 1447 and 1457, a Gdańsk's messenger named Bertold travelled the route between Reval (today Tallinn), Riga, Gdańsk, and Western Europe.¹⁸ Importantly, in addition to a letter, the messenger also provided oral information supplementing the contents of the letter. The messengers travelled on foot and on horseback, as well as by sea. Travel by land took longer than by sea, but it was a relatively reliable method. For urgent and particularly important matters, the letters were sent simultaneously by land and by the faster but riskier sea route.¹⁹ The reality of covering the area of the Hanseatic zone at the time is best indicated by the fact

¹⁶ The mark was a unit of silver weight (around. 195-197 g) and a unit of account, where 1 mark = 4 Viertel-Marken (ferto) = 24 scots (scotus) = 720 pfennigs.

¹⁷ On the subject of messengers carrying correspondence from Gdańsk and the distance covered between the various cities and the remuneration of messengers in Elbląg cf. R. Czaja, *Przenoszenie...*, pp. 9, 12-16.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 17.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 19.



Map 2. Cities to which letters were sent from Gdańsk in the years 1420-1508 in the light of the books of missives.

that the land route from Gdańsk to Bruges (about 1,230 km) was covered by a messenger on foot in about 5 weeks and to Riga (630 km) in 6-7 weeks, while the same destinations were reached by sea in 2-3 weeks.²⁰ In the Hanseatic zone, the regular route for the exchange of correspondence followed a route along the southern coast of the North Sea and the Baltic Sea from Bruges, via Lübeck, the Pomeranian and Prussian cities to Livonia (the overland route from Bruges to Riga was about 1,850 km, and from Bruges to Reval - as much as 2,100 km).²¹ The messengers travelled along this route during the season when it was impossible to sail, *i.e.*, from November to February (11 November-22 February) - a messenger departing from Flanders in November or early December would reach Livonia in early March.²²

When considering the extent and frequency of correspondence carried out with individual cities in the Hanseatic zone, the language used in it by the Gdańsk City Council should also be taken into account. Thanks to the detailed research of Hans Barth, data on the number of letters written in Lower German (*Niederdeutsch*), Middle High German (*Mittelhochdeutsch*), and Latin, as recorded in the missive books between 1420 and 1508, are available.²³ Overall, almost two-thirds (65.8%) of the letters were written in Lower German, a quarter (24.2%) in Middle High German, and only a tenth (9.6%) in Latin. Obviously, the dominance of the Lower German language was primarily due to the intensive correspondence with the Hanseatic cities,²⁴ including a group of Vendish cities - primarily Lübeck, but Rostock and Stralsund as well. The language was also used to write to the exchange offices in Bruges, Antwerp, and London, the cities of Flanders, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and even merchants in Vilnius and Kaunas. In the 15th century, however, the range of the Lower German language was clearly diminishing. Letters and documents addressed to officials of the Teutonic Order and to the Prussian cities (Königsberg, Toruń, Elbląg, Braniewo, Chojnice, Kościerzyna, Człuchów and others), as well as to the cities in Silesia and Saxony, were written in Middle High German. Letters in Middle High German were also addressed to the Polish king and his officials, bishops and monasteries, although Latin was used in these as well.²⁵

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 20.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 21.

²² Ibidem, p. 22.

²³ H. Barth, *Zur Danziger mitteldeutschen Kanzleisprache*, Danzig 1938, pp. 18-31. The author has included a map showing the geographical range of correspondence with the various centres and the use of Lower German and Middle High German (*Geographische Geltung des Niederdeutschen und des Mitteldeutschen nach den Missivbüchern 1420-1500*).

²⁴ H. Samsonowicz, *The Baltic Zone...*, pp. 15-16.

²⁵ H. Barth, *Zur Danziger mitteldeutschen...*, pp. 31-33.

Table 2. Language of the letters recorded in the missive books

Missives book	All letters	Letters written in the language			
		Lower German	Middle High German	Latin	in two languages
Vol. 1 (1420–1430)	221	142	71	5	3
Vol. 2 (1431–1438)	354	243	109	2	-
Vol. 3 (1424–1449)	194	24	3	167	-
Vol. 4 (1440–1448)	535	408	125	1	1
Vol. 5 (1448–1454)	540	381	133	22	4
Vol. 6 (1455–1470)	572	411	123	38	-
Vol. 7 (1489–1508)	393	241	117	35	-
Total number of letters	2809	1850	681	270	8
%	-	65,8	24,2	9,7	0,3

Source: H. Barth, *Zur Danziger mitteldeutschen Kanzleisprache*, Danzig 1938, pp. 18-31.

In addition to the copies of letters sent from Gdańsk, the Gdańsk archive also preserves, of course, the correspondence sent by these cities to Gdańsk.²⁶ By 1519, Gdańsk had received a total of 653 letters from Lübeck,²⁷ 290 letters from Toruń,²⁸ 235 letters from Bruges,²⁹ 143 letters from Słupsk,³⁰ 131 letters from Stralsund,³¹ 95 letters from Hamburg,³² and 67 letters from Rostock.³³

²⁶ For an example of a detailed study based on these sources cf. M. Grulkowski, *Korespondencja Krakowa i Wrocławia z Głównym Miastem Gdańskiem w późnym średniowieczu*, "KLIO. Czasopismo poświęcone dziejom Polski i powszechnym" 23 (2012) 4, pp. 35-71.

²⁷ APG, The records of the city of Gdańsk, Documents up to 1814 and letters up to 1525, APG, 300,D/28-31.

²⁸ APG, 300,D/68-69.

²⁹ APG, 300,D/21.

³⁰ APG, 300,D/35A.

³¹ APG, 300,D/34A.

³² APG, 300,D/25C.

³³ APG, 300,D/32B.

Table 3. Number of documents and letters sent to Gdańsk from selected urban centres in the documents and letters section of the Archives of the City of Gdańsk (section 300,D)

	Letters from						
	Lübeck	Bruges (Kontor)	Stralsund	Hamburg	Rostock	Słupsk	Toruń
Number of letters sent to Gdańsk	653	235	131	95	67	143	290
From year - to year	1378–1519	1380–1519	1378–1519	1396–1519	1380–1519	14th c. –1519	1380–1519

Source: APG, 300,D/21, 25C, 28-31, 32B, 34A, 35A, 68-69.

A detailed study of the correspondence exchanged between Gdańsk and Bremen in the 15th century reveals that it was primarily concerned with the interests of merchants from both cities, mediated by their city councils. The letters discussed matters such as disputes over the settlement of goods, the loss of a ship, an enforcement of debt obligations, or a delivery of an inheritance from a deceased citizen.³⁴ Therefore the relative geographical proximity of the two cities existed and was constantly confirmed, at least in the perception of these among their inhabitants who were involved in trade and business conducted in the Hanseatic zone. The same was true of Gdańsk's correspondence with other Hanseatic centres. Notably, matters concerning terms of trade, financial settlements, debt obligations, and inheritances also appear frequently in correspondence conducted in the late Middle Ages by the Gdańsk City Council with Kraków and Wrocław,³⁵ *i.e.*, centres operating beyond the reach of the Hanseatic zone.³⁶

As already mentioned, an important factor in the perception of the Hanseatic Zone by the inhabitants of medieval Gdańsk were also their personal relationships, resulting from the process of settling the population (including

³⁴ Hanserecesse, Abt. 3, vol. 6, ed. D. Schäfer, Leipzig 1899, pp. 214-215, 218, 220, 222, 225, 227, 229, 231; R. Kubicki, *Comments about the socioeconomic relations of Gdańsk and Bremen in the Middle Ages*, in: *Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth*, ed. Ch. Trübe, E. Gostomski, B. Jeliński, Gdańsk-Sopot 2018, pp. 22-24. Of course, the issue of inheritances and wills was noted primarily in private correspondence, between the parties involved, which unfortunately has not survived for the most part.

³⁵ M. Grulkowski, *Korespondencja...*, pp. 38, 42, 48-69.

³⁶ On the belonging of these towns to the Sudeten Carpathian or High German zone cf. M. Grulkowski, *Korespondencja...*, p. 36; G. Myśliwski, *Strefa sudecko-karpacka i Lwów. Miejsce Śląska, Małopolski i Rusi Czerwonej w gospodarce Europy Zachodniej (połowa XIII-początek XVI wieku)*, in: *Ziemie polskie wobec Zachodu...*, pp. 249-251.

merchants) coming from the area of northern Germany. This seems to have been of particular importance in the case of Gdańsk. It should be recalled that after the destruction of the city in Gdańsk under the Lübeck Law and the removal of its current inhabitants in 1308, the Teutonic Order installed a new urban centre organised under the Chełmno Law in the 1340s.³⁷ This law gave the Teutonic Knights tighter control over the city authorities. The new city, called the Main or Right City of Gdańsk (Germ. *Rechtstadt Danzig*), quickly became not only the main port of the monastic state, thus distancing Elbląg, which was having increasing problems with port navigability at the time, but also its largest urban centre.³⁸ Together with two other towns established in the 14th century in the settlement complex of Gdańsk: the Old Town (city rights probably from 1377) and the Young Town (Germ. *Jungstadt*) (location privilege from 1380), it formed an important centre of trade and production, which attracted numerous settlers coming from both the closer and further hinterlands in the 14th century. The scale of the city's development is evidenced by the fact that, according to conservative estimates, its population, counting the entire settlement complex mentioned, reached 12,000 by the end of the 14th century and 20,000 in the first half of the 15th century. At that time, Gdańsk became the largest city under the Teutonic Order's rule in the whole of Prussia.³⁹ Migrations had a great impact on the composition of the population of the Main City. As the available data on the origin of those who obtained the municipal right in the Main City of Gdańsk between 1364 and 1399 show, 25% came from the monastic state. The inhabitants of Lower Germany were also very numerous (22% of newcomers), particularly from Westphalia and Lower Saxony (Hanover), as well as from Holstein, Schleswig, Mecklenburg, and West Pomerania.⁴⁰ The city's population continued to grow in the 15th century, so that by the end of that

37 M. Biskup, *Kształtowanie się miejskiego zespołu osadniczego*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1: *do roku 1454*, pp. 351-358.

38 Idem, *Handel...*, pp. 398-400.

39 P. Simson, *Geschichte der Stadt Danzig...*, vol. 1, pp. 165; M. Biskup, *Kształtowanie...*, pp. 349.

40 T. Penners, *Untersuchungen über die Herkunft der Stadtbewohner im Deutsch-Ordensland Preussen bis in die Zeit um 1400*, Leipzig 1942; pp. 49-56; E. Keyser, *Die Herkunft der städtischen Bevölkerung des Preussenlandes im Mittelalter*, "Zeitschrift für Ostforschung" 6 (1957), pp. 539-557; M. Biskup, *Ludność*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1: *do roku 1454*, pp. 384. A map showing the origins of settlers arriving in the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia by 1425 was compiled by B. Ristau, *Stadtbewohner des Ordenslandes Preußen bis 1425 nach bezeugten Herkunftsangaben a) aus Orten außerhalb Preußens*, in: *Historisch-Geographischer Atlas des Preussenlandes* (Lieferung 12), ed. H. Mortensen, G. Mortensen, R. Wenskus, H. Jäger, Wiesbaden-Stuttgart 1988. In this context, the problem of how settlers bearing non-local surnames found their way to Gdańsk and other cities should still be considered, together with whether and how important were family relationships and economic contacts with other residents coming from the same urban centres.

century Gdańsk had reached between 30,000 and 35,000 inhabitants.⁴¹ Thus Gdańsk became, alongside Lübeck, the largest urban centre on the Baltic Sea - a city that was large on the European scale, although located in a relatively un-urbanised part of the continent.⁴²

The demographic growth of Gdańsk, which took place in the 14th and 15th centuries, resulted from its economic development. The city gradually established itself as the most important trading centre in this part of Europe. This process occurred gradually and was shaped by a number of economic and political factors that determined the functioning of the entire Hanseatic zone. Additionally, Gdańsk's growth was strongly influenced by its location at the mouth of the Vistula River, which provided cheap transport of bulk goods from the depths of Polish territory.⁴³ Another crucial factor were the changes that took place in the structure of the Baltic trade in the 14th century. The hitherto nature of Hanseatic trade, based in the case of Prussian cities solely on the transit of goods to Bruges, with the dominant position of Lübeck, was gradually extended to include contacts with the Netherlands and England. This was due to the fact that in the latter, mass craftsmanship began to develop, mainly the production of cheaper cloth, which was replacing the more expensive Flanders cloth.⁴⁴ This allowed for the intensification of trade, with the Baltic zone offering not only traditional agricultural and forestry goods in return, but over time also grain (on a large scale from the second half of the 14th century onwards).⁴⁵ These goods, however, no longer came only from east-west transit, but also from the direct hinterland in the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia, Poland, and Lithuania. These processes intensified in the second half of the 14th century, when political relations between Poland and the Teutonic Order's rule in Prussia stabilised.⁴⁶ An increasing demand from the Netherlands and England for ship timber and grain was also a contributory factor, in exchange for which salt was imported from western France (mainly from the Bay of Bourgneuf south

41 H. Samsonowicz, *Późne średniowiecze...*, pp. 73-108; M. Biskup, *Przemiany przestrzenne i demograficzne*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1: *do roku 1454*, p. 500.

42 H. Samsonowicz, *Miejsce Gdańska...*, pp. 84, 87.

43 D. Krannhals, *Die Rolle der Weichsel in der Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Ostens*, in: *Die Weichsel, ihre Bedeutung als Strom und Schifffahrtsstraße und ihre Kulturarbeiten*, Leipzig 1939, pp. 77-152. By the mid-15th century, however, this grain primarily came from the territory of the State of the Teutonic Order in Prussia see Ch. Link, *Der preussische Getreidehandel im 15. Jahrhundert. Eine Studie zur nordeuropäischen Wirtschaftsgeschichte*, Köln-Weimar-Wien 2014 (= *Quellen und Darstellungen zur Hansischen Geschichte* 68), pp. 94-99.

44 H. Samsonowicz, *Miejsce Gdańska w gospodarce europejskiej w XV w.*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 2, p. 77.

45 R. Czaja, *Strefa...*, pp. 220-221.

46 M. Biskup, *Kształtowanie...*, pp. 340-341.

of Nantes) in addition to cheaper Flemish cloth. Under these circumstances, Prussian cities incorporated the Polish-Lithuanian hinterland into their trade, taking advantage of the natural opportunities for cheap water transport provided by the Vistula and Niemen rivers⁴⁷. Gdańsk quickly achieved a dominant position among the Prussian cities - even before 1409, three quarters of the maritime trade of Teutonic Prussia passed through the city.⁴⁸ As the importance of Gdańsk in maritime trade grew, its position in the Hanseatic union strengthened, so that by the beginning of the 15th century it had become the most important among Prussian cities.⁴⁹

2. PERCEPTION OF THE HANSEATIC ZONE FROM GDAŃSK FROM THE 14TH TO EARLY 16TH CENTURIES

Confirmation of these general changes is visible in the activities of individual residents of the city professionally engaged in long-distance trade. Detailed research has already recognised the economic ties of the Gdańsk merchant Johan Pyre, who came to Gdańsk in search of earnings (perhaps from Riga). This issue was recently examined, based on the content of his business book from 1421–1454, by Anna Paulina Orłowska.⁵⁰ Her findings show that he carried out commercial transactions alongside Lübeck in both Livonia (Reval and Riga)⁵¹ and Flanders (Bruges).⁵² He also worked with merchants from the British Isles (England, Scotland).⁵³ His trade book records a total of around 30 towns, mainly in Prussia, but also individual centres in Poland, Pomerania, Silesia, Lithuania, Flanders, the Netherlands, and Norway. Interestingly, Johann conducted his business mainly from Gdańsk. He is only known to have travelled in person on two occasions. In 1424, to an unknown place, and in 1428, to Lübeck.⁵⁴

In the context of the wide geographical range of activities of Gdańsk's merchants, the activities of Bertold Buramer (who died around 1440) are worth mentioning. He was a shipowner and merchant who, together with

47 M. Biskup, *Handel*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1, p. 396.

48 Ibidem, p. 400.

49 M. Biskup, *Rola Gdańska w Związku Miast Hanzeatyckich*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1, pp. 430-431.

50 A.P. Orłowska, *Johan Pyre. Ein Kaufmann und sein Handelsbuch im spätmittelalterlichen Danzig. Darstellung*, Wien-Köln-Weimar 2022, pp. 46-47, 100-107, 261-346. The author corrects the results of an older work by W. von Slaski, *Danziger Handel im XV. Jahrhundert auf Grund eines im Danziger Stadtarchiv befindlichen Handlungsbuches geschildert*, Heidelberg 1905, p. 19.

51 A.P. Orłowska, *Johan Pyre...*, pp. 289-292.

52 Ibidem, pp. 106-107 (including a map showing the extent of business contacts).

53 Ibidem, pp. 280-289.

54 Ibidem, pp. 104, 261-331.

Olaf Nielson, leased Iceland from the King of Denmark in 1438. He was a juror in 1429, a councillor of the Main City of Gdansk in 1431, and represented his city several times at the conventions of Prussian cities.⁵⁵ In this context, let us add that representatives of Gdańsk, of course, also took part in the conventions of the cities in the Hanseatic League.⁵⁶

Further development of Gdańsk as a trade centre took place in the 15th century. Although Lübeck still held an important place in the city's trade relations at that time, where in the second half of the fifteenth century 1/3 of ships arriving in Gdańsk came from, direct contacts with the Dutch became increasingly important. They bought grain and forestry goods in Gdańsk, and imported cloth, herring, and salt from western France.⁵⁷ In the mid-15th century, the Dutch became the main recipients of grain and forest goods from Gdańsk, which Gdańsk merchants sourced from hinterlands of Poland and Lithuania.⁵⁸ In addition to the Dutch, the English were also the recipients of timber and grain at that time.⁵⁹ At the end of the 15th century, the main directions of Gdańsk's trade were, in addition to the slowly declining in role Hanseatic trade on the east-west route, the Netherlands and England. The economic relationship with Portugal, which in the 1450s was buying ship timber, was intensifying.⁶⁰ In addition to traditional export products in the form of timber and forestry goods, grain became increasingly important, dominating from the 1470s onwards (80% of total goods).⁶¹ Consequently, Gdańsk gradually loosened its ties with Lübeck as a result of the increasingly divergent interests of the two cities regarding the Netherlands and England.⁶² Like the whole of eastern Europe at this time, Gdańsk also specialised in the export of agricultural, forestry, and livestock products. Predominant among these were grain, timber, and forest products, which the city sourced in the Baltic zone. Wood, tar, and pitch were acquired by the western shipbuilding industry, while ash was needed for cloth production.⁶³ In this context, let us try to place the geographical horizon of the Gdańsk skipper Caspar Weinreich, who made numerous entries in his trade book from

55 E. Bahr, *Buramer, Berthold*, in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 3, 1957, p. 24; R. Skowrońska-Kamińska, *Posłowie wielkich miast pruskich 1411-1454. Przyczynek do funkcjonowania mieszczańskich elit politycznych w średniowieczu*, Malbork 2007, pp. 97, 98, 136-139, 143-145.

56 R. Skowrońska-Kamińska, *Posłowie...*, pp. 126-146.

57 M. Biskup, *Handel...*, p. 407.

58 Idem, *Przeobrażenia w handlu i rzemiośle*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 1, p. 507.

59 Ibidem, p. 524.

60 Ibidem, p. 530.

61 R. Czaja, *Strefa...*, p. 222.

62 H. Samsonowicz, *Handel zagraniczny Gdańska w drugiej połowie XV wieku (rejonizacja handlu na podstawie ksiąg cła palowego)*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 47 (1956), 2, pp. 283-352; idem, *Miejsce Gdańska w gospodarce...*, p. 89; idem, *Dynamiczny ośrodek handlowy*, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. 2, pp. 123-127.

63 R. Czaja, *Strefa...*, p. 224.

1461 to 1496 that went beyond current economic affairs. This was researched in detail by Julia Możdżeń. In her view, Weinreich's geographical horizon was broad, typical of the interests and activities of a long-distance merchant. Unfortunately, we do not know where he travelled to personally. He conducted business with England. He was well acquainted with the geography of the Danish Straits. In his trade book, he mentions, among others, the Sound (Öresund), Copenhagen, and Zealand. His notes also frequently refer to Bruges (six mentions), as well as Antwerp, Brielle, Rotterdam, Haarlem, and Kampen. The same is, of course, true of the Hanseatic ports of Lübeck, Hamburg, Wismar, Rostock, Stralsund, Greifswald, and Szczecin.⁶⁴ Caspar Weinreich probably also brokered the salt trade from the Bay of Bourgneuf (also referred to for short as "Baie"). He had certainly been to London as well. In his notes, he even mentions areas outside the Hanseatic zone, on the Apennine peninsula and in the Mediterranean, but it is not known if he personally travelled there. In concluding her reflections, the researcher points out that the trade book is probably representative of the records of other skippers using the same sea routes for trade.⁶⁵ The trade book focuses in particular on issues relating to cities within the Hanseatic League and their relationships with various partners.⁶⁶ At a similar time, the records of the stallholder Jacob Lubbe (covering the years 1465-1489) were kept in his trading book.⁶⁷ They are dominated by family and professional matters as well as events taking place in Gdańsk. Among the former, he mentioned his education with the long-distance merchant Heinrich Sanau and gave some details about the course of his son, Heinrich Sanau's, professional education. Mentioned several times in the records, Heinrich is said to have travelled to Poland in 1471 to learn the Polish language, then was sent to England for an apprenticeship, where he was briefly apprenticed in London, before finally resigning from his career as a merchant in 1480 and joining the Cistercian novitiate in Oliva, near Gdańsk.⁶⁸ This case shows, as it were, the natural circle of the education and subsequent professional activities of a long-distance merchant from Gdańsk at the time, which included both Poland and England (London). The chronicle

⁶⁴ J. Możdżeń, *Przedstawianie...*, p. 86.

⁶⁵ Ibidem, pp. 84-87 (including a map accompanying the book: 'Caspar Weinreich's geographical horizon', which includes place names from the Baltic and North Sea areas recorded in his notes). This map was previously presented by the author in the article J. Możdżeń, *Morze w zapiskach gdańskiego szypca Caspra Weinreicha z lat 1461-1496*, in: *W epoce żaglowców. Morze od antyku do XVIII wieku*, ed. B. Możejko, E. Bojaruniec-Król, Gdańsk 2016, pp. 69-80 (the same map, in two parts, pp. 77-78).

⁶⁶ For a detailed discussion cf. J. Możdżeń, *Przedstawianie...*, p. 90.

⁶⁷ We only know of these records from a copy made by a grandson, a member of the same family, Martin Rössler (1490-1565), who was Martin Gruneweg. This one, however, omitted Jacob Lubbe's accounting notes and illegible passages from his copy, J. Możdżeń, *Zapiski...*, pp. 68, 70.

⁶⁸ J. Możdżeń, *Zapiski...*, pp. 71, 74-75.

of Christoph Beyer (1458-1518)⁶⁹ also provides interesting information on the context of the activities of the Gdańsk authorities at the beginning of the 16th century. It notes that in 1507, envoys of the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I, arrived in Gdańsk, demanding assistance in his expedition to Rome. The city authorities refused, at the same time informing the Emperor that the King of Poland was at war with Moscow, the Tatars, the Turks, and other enemies in his country, and that the city of Gdańsk must assist him as its master.⁷⁰ It shall be noted that including this explanation, besides wishing to include the reasons behind the refusal, also indicated the directions of the city's interests and political ties going beyond the Hanseatic zone. Finally, let us recall another Gdańsk chronicle, or rather a compilation of many texts, written in 1528 by Bernt Stegmann. As well as compiling numerous messages taken from various sources, he has also included original messages in his text. They may indicate that he was a moderately wealthy merchant, but that he did not hold any offices in the city. From the contents of the transcripts, it appears that he conducted his own business in Reval, Stockholm, and Denmark.⁷¹ His personal interests were therefore primarily focused within the cities and states located on the Baltic Sea.

To sum up our considerations, let us recall what the map of Gdańsk's trade contacts looked like around 1500 according to Henryk Samsonowicz. At the time, Gdańsk's trade contacts included - in addition to Poland, which had a 32.5% share of trade - primarily northern Germany (12.5% in total, including: Brandenburg 4%, Mecklenburg 3%, Stettin Pomerania 3.5%, Lower Saxony 2%), the Netherlands (12.4%), Lübeck (6.4%), the Atlantic Coast (5.5%), and Livonia (4.2%). Trade with other areas accounted for more than 13% of the total trade turnover of the city.⁷² This includes only 0.3% with Hamburg and Bremen. The map of the town's economic contacts is, of course, confirmed by the intensity and extent of the correspondence carried out by the city council in the 14th and 15th centuries. The same

69 Edition of the *Christoph Beyer des ältern Danziger Chronik*, ed. T. Hirsch, in: *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, vol. 5, pp. 413-491. Problems with interpreting its content, due to the fact that the publisher of the chronicle, Theodor Hirsch, rather artificially separated it from the later chronicle of Stenzel Bornbach (1530-1597), were pointed out by J. Możdżeń, *Przedstawianie...*, p. 24.

70 "mussen sie dem konige hulff und rath thuen, als ihrem herren", *Christoph Beyer des ältern Danziger Chronik*, p. 455. This aspect of the circle of geographical connections of Gdansk was already pointed out by H. Schmiedt, *Die deutschen Städtechroniken...*, p. 107.

71 J. Możdżeń, *Gdańszczanin Bernt Stegmann i jego umoralniająca kompilacja z 1528 roku, "Libri Gedanenses"* 34 (2017), pp. 59-60, 75-76; *Gdańska kronika Bernta Stegmannna (1528 r.)*, ed. J. Możdżeń, cooperation K. Stöbner, M. Sumowski, Toruń 2019 (= *Fontes TNT* 117), pp. VII-XXI, XXVI-XLI.

72 They were: Denmark with Gotland 4.5%, Sweden 4%, England 4%, and Scotland 2%, V. Lauffer, *Danzigs Schiffs- und Warenverkehr am Ende des XV Jahrhunderts*, "Zeitschrift des Westpreussischen Geschichtsverein" 33 (1894), pp. 1-44; H. Samsonowicz, *Dynamiczny ośrodek handlowy*, p. 95 (Table 7 Trade contacts of Gdańsk around 1500). The issue of the city's commodity turnover and its reflection in the surviving correspondence will require further research in detailed studies in the future.

applies to the activities of individual merchants, both active in the first half of the 15th century Johan Pyre, as well as Caspar Weinreich, a skipper operating in the second half of the same century. The latter in particular confirms with his notes that the Hanseatic Zone was, as it were, the natural horizon of economic interests of the inhabitants of Gdańsk. Of course, this mainly applied to merchants and skippers. The vast majority of the inhabitants of Gdańsk lived for local affairs, the city and the surrounding area, as was the case with the stallholder Jacob Lubbe. However, they had heard a lot about the faraway world and saw foreigners arriving in the harbour virtually every day.

ABSTRACT

The article examines the problem of the perception of the Hanseatic zone in Gdańsk from the 14th to the beginning of the 16th centuries. It is assumed that in the case of the "Hanseatic zone" and the cities belonging to the Hanseatic League, the basic indicator of its reach were the conditions of trade exchange, *i.e.*, the general framework of east-west economic contacts and the participation in it of representatives of individual cities. The "zone" here is understood as an economic and social unity of human activity and organisation, with large cities being the distinguishing and defining factor of its activity (R.E. Dickinson, J.C. Russell). A fundamental dimension of the perception of the Hanseatic zone was the personal relationships of the inhabitants, resulting from the process of settlement of the population (including merchants) arriving from the North German (the Empire) area in the port cities along the Baltic Sea. Part of this process was also the migration of the German population settling in the Teutonic Order's state of Prussia, including craftsmen and merchants arriving in the area's main urban and port centres including Gdańsk. Therefore, the correspondence of the Gdańsk authorities with other cities in the 14th and 15th centuries, conducted in commercial and other matters, usually regarding the richest inhabitants of the cities (merchants and members of the power elite - councillors, jurors), was analysed. Further considerations also include the personal perspective of the merchants and burghers, as reflected in the trade books they kept (Johan Pyre), which were sometimes expanded with numerous notes of a historical and personal nature (Jacob Lubbe, Caspar Weinreich, Christoph Beyer, Bernt Stegmann). The analyses carried out show that the map of Gdańsk's economic contacts is confirmed by the intensity and extent of the correspondence carried out by the city council in the 14th and 15th centuries. The same is also true of the activities of individual merchants, both the merchant Johan Pyre, active in the first half of the 15th century, and the skipper Caspar Weinreich, active in the second half of that century. The latter in particular confirms with his notes that the Hanseatic Zone was, as it were, the natural horizon of economic interests of the inhabitants of Gdańsk. Of course, this mainly applied to merchants and skippers. The vast majority of the inhabitants of Gdańsk lived for local affairs, the city and the surrounding area, as was the case with the stallholder Jacob Lubbe. However, they had heard a lot about the faraway world and saw foreigners arriving in the harbour virtually every day.

Keywords: Hanseatic zone, economic and social contacts, Gdansk (Germ. Danzig), Middle Ages

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THE "SEPHARDIC" DIASPORA IN LISBON AND NAPLES



1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of diaspora in general and, specifically, the Hebrew concept of *galut* have inspired numerous academic studies in the field of history, literature, philosophy, and cultural studies over the last decades.

Academics specialising in Jewish history have long confronted the concept of exile (*galut*)² and diaspora (*tefutoth*)³ in their work. Particularly illustrative in this regard are the diaspora studies linked to the expulsion of the Iberian Jews, as shown by the early works by Yitzhak Baer⁴ and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi.⁵

¹ Research Project "Pacto, negociación y conflicto en la cultura política castellana (1230-1516)" State Research Agency of Spain (PID2020-113794GB-I00). Research Group "Identidad y Territorio en la Edad Media" (ITEM-URJC). I am grateful to James Nelson Novoa and to Alejandro Baer Mises for his helpful suggestions and comments on this paper.

² Galut is a term associated with the destruction of the Second Temple and holds national-religious significance. It refers to the exile of the people of Israel from their land. Jews live in galut until they return to their ancestral homeland.

³ In post-1948 Israel, the term *tefutoth* came into broader use since it was also the name of the Museum of the Diaspora in Tel Aviv (*Beyt ha-Tefutoth*) until it was renamed *Anu* ("We") in 2021. *Tefutoth* was preferred over *diaspora* because it does not carry the connotation of forced expatriation.

⁴ See: Y. Baer, *Galut*, Berlin 1936, and Y. Baer, *Die Juden im christlichen Spanien. Erster Teil: Urkunden und Regesten*, vol. 1-2, Berlin 1929-1936.

⁵ Alongside the previously cited Zakhor, on this subject see also Y.H. Yerushalmi. *Jewish people and Palestine: bibliophilic pilgrimage through five centuries*, Cambridge 1973. Or his doctoral thesis on Isaac Cardoso: Y.H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto. Isaac Cardoso: a study in seventeenth-century Marranism and Jewish apologetics*, New York 1971.

Jonathan Ray observes that, paradoxically, despite the increasing volume of research in this field, this case continues to be generally addressed in a broad and uniform manner. Accordingly, there are few specific publications on the sub-movements or *micro-diasporas* that comprised the late medieval Iberian *galut*.⁶

In this study, my focus will be on the formative years, particularly those immediately following 1492, of the Iberian Jewish diaspora. Specifically, I will explore the process of exile experienced by Spanish Jews from the crowns of Castile and Aragon, who did not convert to Christianity after the proclamation of the *Alhambra Decree*, which gave them until 31 July 1492 to convert to Christianity or depart from lands governed by the Catholic Monarchs.

I will present two prominent escape routes employed by the displaced population: Portugal and Naples. These were favoured destinations for those compelled to leave their homes, yet ultimately, they found constraints on religious freedom in these places. The central focus of my research revolves around this aspect.

2. JEWS IN MEDIEVAL SPAIN

The expulsion of Jews from Late Medieval Spain had a profound impact on the cultural, economic, political, and religious evolution of the Iberian kingdoms. Given its magnitude and consequences, it also significantly influenced the entire Mediterranean Basin during the late 15th century and the Early Modern Period. While 1492 is universally recognized as the commencement of the Sephardic diaspora, it's important to note that the process of migration from the Iberian kingdoms began many years earlier, as evinced by historical records.

By the 4th century, a substantial Jewish community had established itself in the Iberian Peninsula. Documentation reveals that the first conflicts with the Christian majority occurred in the 6th century, following the end of Arianism in the Visigothic kingdom. It was during this period that the first aggressive conversion campaigns began.⁷

In the period leading up to the expulsion in 1492, the Jewish population in Iberia underwent phases of fluctuating tolerance, largely influenced by the policies of the governing authorities of the time. For instance, in Al-Andalus, the remarkable cultural flourishing of the Jewish community during the Caliphate era in the 11th century was succeeded by a wave of migration and fleeing prompted by the rise of the Almoravid and

⁶ J. Ray, *New Approaches to the Jewish Diaspora: The Sephardim as Sub-Ethnic Group*, "Jewish Social Studies" 15 (2008), 1, pp. 10-31.

⁷ R. González Salinero, *Un antecedente: la persecución contra los judíos en el Reino visigodo*, in: *El antisemitismo en España*, ed. G. Álvarez Chillida, R. Izquierdo Benito, Cuenca 2007, pp. 57-88.

Almohad dynasties. This period found symbolic representation in the exile of the renowned Cordoban philosopher Maimonides.⁸

In numerous regions of Western Europe, the proclamation of the First Crusade in the late 11th century, the popularization of blood libels, the Black Death and, sometimes, the simple urban restructuring of a city⁹ triggered waves of anti-Judaism, often correlated with natural disasters and plague outbreaks. In contrast, in the Iberian Peninsula, the dynamics of the Christian majorities' interaction with the Jewish population and their *Aljamas* and *kahals*¹⁰ would have different timeframes.

The year 1391 holds significant importance in the history of the Jewish people in Iberia and is acknowledged by most scholars studying the expulsion as a direct precedent to this event.¹¹ On June 6 of that year, a pogrom erupted in Seville, marking the beginning of a series of similar violent events in most major cities across both Castile and Aragon. The aftermath included not only a significant loss of life, with approximately 4,000 deaths in Seville alone according to the chronicler Pero López de Ayala, but also the initiation of a widespread process of mass conversions and large-scale departure from both kingdoms. Yet, it was not only the pogroms or the decree of expulsion that led to Jewish families fleeing. The establishment of the Inquisition in lands governed by the Catholic Monarchs (1478 in Castile and 1483 in Aragon) led to persecution and the consequent departure of many *conversos* and Marranos¹² (*Anusim*) who, like many Portuguese *conversos* between 1497 and 1506, would become part of what is today known as the Sephardic diaspora.

This paper will specifically concentrate on examining the Sephardic diaspora in Portugal and Naples. Before delving into the reasons why this comparative analysis may yield valuable insights, it is beneficial to briefly analyse a pivotal concept in Medieval Iberian history, the idea of "Convivencia", a notion that has transcended historiographical boundaries, given rise to a series of clichés regarding the presumed interreligious tolerance in medieval Spain.

8 J.R. Hinojosa Montalvo, *Los judíos en la España medieval: de la tolerancia a la expulsión*, in: *Los marginados en el mundo medieval y moderno*, ed. M. San Pedro, M. de los Desamparados, Almería 2000, p. 26.

9 P. Martínez García, *La minoría judía en el Sacro Imperio bajomedieval: El caso de Núremberg*, "Minorías 10, Publications of eHumanista" (2024), pp. 180-196.

10 'Kahal' (or Qahal) community or assembly in Hebrew, in the setting of the Late Middle Ages in Iberia, is understood as the self-governing administrative structure of Jewish communities.

11 See: J. Valdeón Baroque, *Conflictos sociales y antijudaísmo en el Reino de Castilla en el siglo XIV*, in: *Proceedings of the Seventh World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Jerusalén, 1981, vol. 3, pp. 101-113; L. Suárez Fernández, *La expulsión de los judíos*, "Razón española: Revista bimestral de pensamiento" 45 (1991), pp. 59-61, and J. Pérez, *Los judíos en España*, Madrid 2005.

12 On onomastics and Jewish population in Spain, see: R. Muñoz Solla, *Nombrando a la minoría: onomástica y población judía en el reino de Castilla (siglo XV)*, "Minorías eBooks 6, Publications of eHumanista" (2020), pp. 49-65.

The commonplace notion of harmony among the “three cultures” of the Iberian Peninsula has been frequently problematized, notably since the debates initiated by Américo Castro and Claudio Sánchez Albornoz on the shaping of the “Spanish identity”.¹³ Regarding the subject of Iberian Jews in the Middle Ages, contemporary scholars as Ray and Gampel¹⁴ present an interesting line of analysis. Instead of solely examining the presumed tolerance of Christian or Muslim rulers towards Jewish communities and the purported promotion of peaceful coexistence, they advocate for a nuanced exploration of how Jews, particularly religious and *Kahal* leaders, perceived the conversions and processes of acculturation resulting from this intercultural harmony. This approach cautions against interpreting this dynamics solely through contemporary standards without considering the mindset prevalent during that historical period. In this regard, scholars of Sephardic history, such as those mentioned above, argue that cohabitation was shaped precisely by mutual Muslim, Christian, and Jewish interest in preventing interreligious harmony. They also emphasize the plurality and diversity of the various Iberian Jewish communities, noting that their interactions with other religious and cultural actors varied enormously across different locations and contexts.

Prior to the expulsion, most Jews lived their lives in communities and areas, grouped together in Aljamas and linked by almost exclusively regional networks of contacts. These practices would be repeated after the enactment of the Alhambra Decree in 1492. As a result, emigrants to Portugal, Naples, or other destinations often identified in the documentation by their place of origin, sometimes describing themselves as “from Seville”, “from Barcelona”, and, in some instances, affiliating with broader regional identities such as “Castilian” or “Aragonese”. However, they rarely are identified as Sephardic, a concept that gradually took shape during the period of exile, particularly as exiles ventured farther from Iberia. In the latter half of the 16th century, the term Sepharadim, derived from rabbinic traditions, became widely adopted among Mediterranean Jews as a general designation for those with Iberian heritage.¹⁵ This *Galut Sefarad* ultimately resulted in the “Sefardization” of numerous other Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire and North Africa.¹⁶

13 A. Castr, *España en su historia. Cristianos, moros y judíos*, Buenos Aires 1948, and C. Sánchez Albornoz, *España: un enigma histórico*. Sudamericana, Buenos Aires 1957.

14 J. Ray, *New Approaches to the Jewish Diaspora...*, pp. 10-31; B.R. Gampel, *Jews, Christians, and Muslims in Medieval Iberia: Convivencia through the Eyes of Sephardic Jews*, in: *Convivencia*, ed. V. Mann, Th.F. Glick, J.D. Dodds, New York 1992, pp. 10-37.

15 J. Ray, *After Expulsion: 1492 and the Making of Sephardic Jewry*, New York 2013.

16 N. Koryakina, *The first exile is ours: the terms golah and galut in medieval and early modern Jewish response*, in: *Expulsion and Diaspora Formation: Religious and Ethnic Identities in Flux from Antiquity to the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J. Tolan, Turnhout 2015, pp. 103-116.

This perception of the "other" and self-perception also played a role in shaping the formation of neighbourhoods and communities in foreign lands. In the context of Naples, even with shared geographical origins and a common language among many migrants, they did not regard themselves as part of a unified "nation", at least not in the initial generations of the diaspora.¹⁷

3. PORTUGAL AND NAPLES

The primary destination for expelled Jews, especially those from Castile, due to its proximity and convenience, was Portugal. More conservative estimates, such as those from Ladero Quesada or Suárez Fernández, suggest around 70,000 individuals in the case of the former,¹⁸ rising to a maximum of 100,000 as stated by the latter.¹⁹ In contrast, Yitzhak Baer provides a higher estimate of almost 170,000.²⁰

For the kingdom of Aragon, a minimum of 12,000 is calculated, a figure deemed considerably lower than the actual number by Hinojosa Montalvo. Hinojosa's extensive study of shipping contracts with major Mediterranean ports suggests a higher number. Additionally, in the case of the Kingdom of Aragon, it is important to note that many Jews also departed from Aragonese territories outside the Iberian Peninsula, such as Sicily and Sardinia. Cesare Colafemmina has conducted a thorough examination of documentation from southern Italy in this context.²¹

Despite Portugal not providing firm assurances to the exiles, Andrés Bernáldez, the chronicler of the Catholic Monarchs, notes the arrival of 93,000 people in Portugal.²²

The Portuguese king, João II, allowed to the influx of people under conditions that were evidently precarious for the Sephardic community but highly advantageous for the Portuguese treasury. Those wishing to enter the kingdom had to do so through Olivenza, Arronches, Castelo Rodrigo, Braganza,

17 On the Portuguese converso community in early modern Italy, particularly regarding the concept of *nação*, see J. Nelson Novoa, *Being the Nação in the Eternal City. New Christian Lives in Sixteenth-Century Rome*, Peterborough 2014.

18 M.A Ladero Quesada, *El número de judíos en la España de 1492; los que se fueron*, in: *Judíos, Sefarditas, Conversos; la expulsión de 1492 y sus consecuencias*, ed. A. Alcalá, Valladolid 1995, pp. 170-180.

19 L. Suárez Fernández, *Los Trastámara y los Reyes Católicos*, Madrid 1985, pp. 322-323.

20 Y. Baer, *Die Juden im christlichen Spanien. Erster Teil: Urkunden und Regesten*, Berlin 1929. Pimenta Ferro Tavares (1982) provides a precise figure of 30.000 significantly distant from other scholars.

21 See C. Colafemmina, *Documenti per la storia degli ebrei in Puglia nell'Archivio di Stato di Napoli*, Bari 1990 and idem, *The Jews in Calabria*, Leiden 2012.

22 A. Bernáldez, *Historia de los Reyes Católicos Don Fernando y Doña Isabel*, Sevilla 1870, p. 339.

or Melgazo. They were required to pay 8 *cruzados* and commit to a maximum stay of 8 months in the kingdom. This compelled most of those expelled to bear the expenses of preparing ships for their subsequent journeys and covering the costs of their passage. Only specialist workers and their families had the theoretical option of remaining in the kingdom and many those who failed to meet the conditions eventually reduced to slavery.²³ It is widely recognized that many individuals who continued their journey after the permitted eight months ultimately settled in North Africa, and several thousand were unable to leave Portugal. In the case of Portugal, those staying would have to face a new expulsion decree signed by Manuel I in 1497. The king ordered, furthermore, that all Jewish children below the age of 14 be adopted by Christian families.²⁴

This subsequent expulsion did not signify the conclusion of the diaspora process; instead, it marked the initiation of a new stage characterized by conversion, concealment, and the compelled continuation of exile for those who refused to convert. From 1497 to 1506, anti-Jewish campaigns persisted in Portugal. In the Easter of 1506, amid a power vacuum in Lisbon triggered by the Black Death, between 2,000 and 4,000 individuals lost their lives in an anti-*Converso* riot in the capital.

During the brief period of religious coexistence in Portugal, a significant number of Jewish intellectuals and scientists arrived in Portugal from Castile. Among them were the astronomer Abraham Ben Zacuto and the doctor and writer Solomon ibn Verga, who, along with Samuel Usque, would eventually become the best-known chroniclers of the diaspora. Both individuals embodied what Edward Peters has referred to as Jewish “protomodern historical consciousness”.²⁵ Both Ibn Verga and Usque witness the 1506 massacre and give an account of it in their works on exile: “The Sceptre of Judah”²⁶ and “Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel”.²⁷

19 April 1506 would be a turning point for the *Converso* community in Portugal. Just a decade earlier, all Jews residing in the kingdom had been compelled to convert to Christianity. However, this conversion did not

23 M. Da Costa Fontes, *Four Portuguese Crypto-Jewish prayers and their ‘inquisitorial’ counterparts*, “Mediterranean Language Review” 6-7, Special Issue Commemorating the 5th Centenary of the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain: 1492-1992 (1990-1993), p. 68.

24 A. Herculano, *História da Origem e Estabelecimento da Inquisição em Portugal*, vol. 1, Mem Martins 1982, p. 74.

25 E. Peters, *Jewish History and Gentile Memory: The Expulsion of 1492*, “Jewish History” 9 (1995), 1, pp. 9-34.

26 J. Cohen, *A Historian in Exile Solomon ibn Verga, Shevet Yehudah, and the Jewish-Christian Encounter*, Philadelphia 2017.

27 S. Usque, *Consolação às tribulações de Israel*, Edição de Ferrara, 1553, ed. Y.H. Yerushalmi, J.V. de Pina Martins, Lisboa 1989.

diminish anti-Jewish sentiments, leading to one of the most severe massacres experienced by *conversos* in Early Modern Europe.²⁸

During the Easter celebrations on that day, hundreds of people gathered near the Church of São Domingos in Lisbon. The previous year, as well as the current one, had been challenging for the population of Lisbon, marked by a plague outbreak, food shortages, and the consequent absence of King Manuel I from the region.

As on many other occasions, the catalyst for the violence was an alleged miracle. Several witnesses claimed to have seen it when they observed the face of Christ illuminated by a flame in the church. According to contemporary sources,²⁹ a Converso was accused of reacting sceptically to the supposed miracle and this unleashed a massacre that was described in great detail by this anonymous German who happened to be in Lisbon when the pogrom erupted:

All the New Christians or Jews. Men and women, the young and the old, they went after them in the streets, in their homes, or wherever they pleased they killed them. They took many of them prisoner and led them to the square of Santo Domingo where they made a fire and cast the living onto it. In the homes and in the streets, youths were caught and ropes were tied around their necks, arms, and feet, which they used to drag them along the ground to Santa Domingo where they were thrown onto the fire.³⁰

One of the most recent sources found in the National Archive of Torre do Tombo regarding the massacre indicates that a German was the instigator of the violence.³¹ According to this source, attributed to the chronicler

28 For Susana Bastos Mateus and Paulo Mendes Pinto, the forced conversion of Jews living in Portugal, far from ending the hostility of a large part of the population, led to the emergence of a new internal enemy that was segregated and invisible and therefore more dangerous. S. Bastos Mateus, P. Mendes Pinto, *O Massacre dos Judeus. Lisboa, 19 de abril de 1506*, Lisbon 2015.

29 In addition to Samuel Usque and Solomon Ibn Verga, who witnessed the massacre, there are the accounts provided by the Chronicle of Don Manuel by Damião de Góis, the Life and Deeds of King Don Manuel by Jerónimo Osorio, and the Chronicle of Juan II by García de Resende. As well as these better-studied texts, we have an anonymous account from a German sailor who claimed to have been a direct witness of the start of the massacre. See: Y.H. Yerushalmi, *Lisbon massacre of 1506 and the royal image in the Shebet Yehudah*, Cincinnati 1980, pp. 9-11.

30 Author's translation of: BSB Res/4 Germ.g. 197 Von de[m] christenlichen streyt geschehen jm M.CCCC.VI. Jar zu Lißbona ein haubtstat in Portigal zwischen den christen un[d] neuen christen oder juden, von wegen des gecreutzigten got. Fol. 2.

31 *Chronicas dos Reis de Portugal e sumarios das suas vidas com a historia das Indias e Armadas que se mandaram athe o anno de 1533* (Archivo Nacional de Torre do Tombo, Casa Forte, 43^a). This is one of the most recently discovered documents on the massacre and was analysed in depth by François Soyér (2007).

Gaspar Correia,³² many Germans were in the crowd, including a sailor or merchant with his daughter. In the account, this individual claimed that his daughter had been miraculously cured of a deformed hand when an anonymous man identified as a “New Christian” called for water to be poured on the image to extinguish the flame and expose the fraud. The German father, outraged by this statement, stabbed the *Converso* to death. Another man then intervened to argue that the *Converso* had spoken truthfully, at which point the crowd grew enraged. As François Soyer notes, an official present that day described the violent crowd as “foreigners from outside of Portugal” and “scoundrels from the riverside area and plebs attracted by loot”.³³

The massacre will have a profound effect on the Jewish community of Lisbon and would result in the departure of numerous families who in many cases would flee once more to the south of Italy or would at least spend some time there on their way to the Ottoman Empire.

Many of those who left Iberia from the Eastern coast after the declaration of the Alhambra Decree in 1496 chose to travel to the Kingdom of Naples. In that realm, as in other Italian cities (mainly Pisa, Ferrara, Venice, and Genoa), they would subsequently meet some of those who had previously passed through Portugal and Portuguese Judaizers, fleeing from anti-Jewish riots, who were denying their forced baptism, known as “Ponentines”.³⁴ The distinction between Levantines and Ponentines persisted as significant categories of identity in Italy throughout much of the early modern period. The term Levantines referred to the earlier wave of Sephardic Jews who arrived in Italy via the Ottoman Empire, while Ponentines served as a euphemism for the later wave of *conversos* from Portugal.³⁵

Regarding the departure of Aragonese Jews towards the south of Italy, the noteworthy work of José Hinojosa Montalvo stands out, particularly his extensive research on Jews in Valencia. Additionally, the previously mentioned authors Yitzhak Baer and Suárez Fernández, along with Julio Caro

32 F. Soye, *The Massacre of the New Christians of Lisbon in 1506: A New Eyewitness Account*, “Cadernos de Estudos Sefarditas” 7 (2007), pp. 221-244, and A. Banha de Andrade, *Gaspar Correia Inédito*, “Revista de Universidade de Coimbra” 26 (1977), pp. 5-49.

33 “estramgeiros de fora daterra” and “bargamtes da Rybeira e gemte bayxa por caso do roubo” - F. Soye, *The Massacre of the New Christians...*, p. 228.

34 As Melammed notes when quoting Renata Segree, when exiled Portuguese Jews in Italy disregarded their status as forced converts (*anusim*) they were called Ponentines in contrast to the New Christians. R.L. Melammed, *Adapting and Adopting Conversos and the Sephardi Diaspora*, “Hispania Judaica Bulletin” (2011), 8/5771, p. 90.

35 J. Ray, *Iberian Jewry between West and East: Jewish Settlement in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean*, “Mediterranean Studies” 18 (2009), p. 57.

Baroja, contribute valuable data on the migration of Jews from Mediterranean ports. In every case, the position of Valencia, Almeria, Barcelona, and, to a lesser extent, Cartagena and Tortosa is clear as a point of departure not only for Italy, but also North Africa (Tunisia, Fez, and Tlemcen) and cities in the Ottoman Empire, such as Thessaloniki and Alexandria.³⁶

As mentioned earlier, beyond the territories of the Crown of Aragon, other regions distant from Iberia would also be impacted by the Alhambra Decree. Many of the Jews opting for exile would choose Italy, with Naples being a preferred destination. eloquent example of Jewish migration from outside Iberia to Naples is found in Sicily³⁷ and in the documents of the State Archives of Naples and of Palermo we find inquiries and summaries in the *Cámara Sumaria del Reino*.

Particularly illustrative of the swiftness and defencelessness of the exiles is the letter from Fernando de Acuña, viceroy of Sicily, explaining the theft of all the possessions of several Jews from Nicosia and Naro by a vassal of the King of Naples as they made their way to exile in Giogia.

(...) Innati ad nui su noviter comparsi certi Iudei di li terri di Nicosia et di Naro, li quali cum gravissima querela mi hanno expostu comu havendosi ipsi cum loru mugleri et figli inbarcatu supra la sigicta di la terra di Sanctu Nuchitu patroniczata per uno nomine Antoni di Branca vassallu di vostra Maiestà ad effectu di conferirisi a la terra di Ioya, accidit che per lu camino li incontrao una caravella patronizata per Vicenciu Pizuli, similiter vassallo di vostra Sacra Maiestà cum diri ipsu patruni teniri mia commissioni trovando persuni et beni di Iudei putirili per contrabando et quilli minari in quistu Regnu et presentari innanti ad mi, et cussì de facto si prisi tucti beni de dicti Iudei (...).³⁸

In the Neapolitan archives, we can also find sources regarding the arrival of newly-arrived Jews (*Iudey noviter*), such as the following inquiry from the *Cámara Sumaria*, in which Bartholomey Boschi, the man tasked with taking a census of and settling Jews, is asked to raise a contribution of 6,000 ducats for the establishment of the new arrivals. A demand was made for this money so as to compensate for the amount that had been provided by the King for poor and sick Jews that had recently arrived in the kingdom.

³⁶ J.R. Hinojosa Montalvo, *Solidaridad judía ante la expulsión: contratos de embarque (Valencia, 1492)*, "Saitabi: revista de la Facultat de Geografia i Història" 33 (1983), pp. 108-110.

³⁷ N. Zeldes, N. Nadav, N. Vered, *The reception of spanish and sicilian exiles by the populace of the kingdom of Naples*, Jerusalem 2017, and N. Zeldes, *The Mass Conversion of 1495 in South Italy and its Precedents: a Comparative Approach*, "Medieval Encounters" 25 (2019), pp. 227-262.

³⁸ ASPA, Protonotaro, reg. 153, cc. 278r-279r. in: C. Colafemmina, *The Jews in Calabria...*

Bartholomey Boschi.

Magnifice vir, fidelis regie et amice noster cariissime, salutem. Havend-ove la Maiestà del signore Re ordinato conmissario tanto circa lo fare dela numeratione deli Iudey noviter venuti ad habitare in questo Regno, quanto circa lo dare delo ordine et providere circa la collacacione de quelli per le terre, secundo che lo bisogno recercher'e, quanto ancora circa la exaccione deli sey milia, quali de presente haveno de exigere da dicti Iudey del Regno, zoè ducati duomilia, quali se haveno de exigere dali Iudey antiqui regnicoli quali habitavano in dicto Regno (...).³⁹

As observed in this instance, newcomers had to pay 2,000 ducats, with the remaining 4,000 ducats to be contributed by Jews who were already established residents in the kingdom (*Iudey antiqui*).

The Italian exile of Iberian Jews would continue at least until the coronation of Ferdinand III (Ferdinand II of Aragon, "the Catholic") in 1504. Before that date, there was a certain atmosphere of tolerance towards Jews in Naples.⁴⁰ At the time of the expulsion, the monarch in Naples was King Ferrante, the illegitimate son of Alfonso V of Aragon, depicted in Jewish chronicles as "a wise and mighty man ... righteous among the nations".⁴¹ During his reign, Naples emerged as a significant hub for the production of Hebrew manuscripts and printing. In the late 15th century, the city stood out as one of the most important centers for the creation of books dedicated to the Jewish faith.⁴² In this same period, one of the king's advisors was Judah Abravanel (León Hebreo), a Sephardic philosopher and poet who had fled Portugal to Castile with his father, Isaac Abravanel, in 1483 for political reasons. He was exiled a second time to Naples as a result of the Alhambra Decree in 1492. Interestingly, Abravanel's most renowned work, *Dialoghi d'amore*, was published for the first time in Rome and in Italian.⁴³

Aragonese Jews were not the sole travelers to Italy. As previously noted, because of the Alhambra Decree and the later expulsion from Portugal, numerous Castilians and Portuguese departed Portugal for Italy. We have a direct testimony from one of the most well-known travel accounts to

³⁹ Ibidem. ASNA, Sommaria, Partium 35, fols. 217v-218r.

⁴⁰ After the death of Ferrante, Jews in Campania and Apulia would start to suffer persecution during the French invasion of Charles VIII, even if the Kingdom of Naples' first decree of expulsion would only be signed in 1510.

⁴¹ N. Zeldes, *The Mass Conversion of 1495...*, p. 231.

⁴² See: J. Bloch, *Hebrew printing in Naples*, New York 1942, and A.K. Offenber, *The printing history of the Constantinople Hebrew Incunabula of 1493: a Mediterranean voyage of discovery*, "The British Library Journal" 22 (1996), 2 (Autumn), pp. 221-235.

⁴³ J. Nelson Novoa, *New Documents Regarding the Publication of Leone Ebreo's Dialoghi d'amore*, "Hispania Judaica Bulletin" 5 (2007), pp. 271-283.

the Iberian Peninsula from the Late Middle Ages: Hieronymus Münzer's *Itinerarium*.⁴⁴ During his stay in Lisbon "which is larger than Nuremberg and more populous", he learns that there is a large group of Jews from Castille that is setting out for Italy. At the city's port, Münzer would be witness to a group of "Marranos" boarding one of these ships, the *Reina*. On board, the exiles were guarded by 30 German bombardiers, under the command of Georius Piet, a native of the region of Feldkirch, where Münzer was also from.⁴⁵

The quote from *Itinerarium* and the account from the anonymous German exemplify the consistent presence of *Landsknechts*, artillerymen, sailors, and other specialists from the Holy Roman Empire in Portugal during its period of Atlantic expansion.⁴⁶ Interestingly, all these German cultural and diplomatic agents would later become targets of persecution when the Inquisition was established in Portugal 30 years later, and Protestants were no longer tolerated there either.

The influx of thousands of Jewish migrants from Castille and Aragon had an undeniable impact on both Portugal and Naples. In Portugal, the efforts to join existing Portuguese Jewish communities or to establish new *Aljamas* would be unsuccessful as by 1497 a new expulsion would be decreed and in 1536 the Inquisition was also established in Lusitanian kingdom. A notable aspect of the Iberian Jews' odyssey is that many (including those who first went to Portugal) inevitably stopped in Italy, particularly in Naples, where, as recorded, they faced expulsion in 1510 under the rule of Ferdinand II of Aragon.⁴⁷

44 On Münzer's itinerary to the Iberian Peninsula and questions of alterity and identity see: P. Martínez García, *El cara a cara con el otro: la visión de lo ajeno a fines de la Edad Media y comienzos de la Edad Moderna a través del viaje*, Frankfurt am Main 2015. On the diplomatic side of the *Itinerarium* and Münzer's stay in Portugal, see: P. Martínez García, *El Sacro Imperio y la diplomacia atlántica: el Itinerario de Hieronymus Münzer*, in: *Diplomacia, comercio y navegación entre las ciudades medievales de la Europa atlántica*, ed. T. Solórzano, J. Ángel, Logroño 2015, pp. 103-125.

45 "Exeuntes autem hunc navem ingressi sumus navem Regine, o quam pulcram et omnibus bene instructam navem. Que habebat 36 maximas bombardas et 180 alias bombardas, vasa multa pulveris, missiha, hastas, balistas, et erat preparata, ut in diebus Decembris veheret Marranos ad Neapolim. Et fuerunt in ea ordinati 30 bombardarii, omnes Alman, quorum capitaneus Georius Piet de Atzmaus, villa supra Fellkirch circa Salgans, homo bonus et verax, quem Rex valde dilexit", H. Münzer, *"Itinerarium"*, ed. E.Ph. Goldschmidt, "Revue Hispanique" 48 (1920), pp. 85-86.

46 On the German *bombardeiros da nómina* in Portugal, see: G.M. Metzsig, *Kanonnen im Wunderland. Deutsche Büchschützen im portugiesischen Weltreich (1415-1640)*, "Militär und Gesellschaft in der frühen Neuzeit" 14 (2010), pp. 267-298.

47 C. Colafemmina, 1510, Novembre 21: *le prammatiche di espulsione degli Enrei e dei Neofiti dal regno dio Napoli*, "Sefer Yuhasin" 26 (2010), pp. 1-21, and 1510/2010 Cinquecentenario dell'espulsione degli ebrei dall'Italia meridionale: *Atti del Convegno Internazionale. Napoli, Università "L'Orientale" - 22 Novembre 2010*, ed. G. Lacerenza, Naples 2010.

Over time, this atmosphere of instability and constant change led to increased interaction between Jewish communities with different traditions. In Naples, the blending and mutual influence between Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities became commonplace. Moreover, the population originating from Iberia would undeniably leave its mark on the culture, economy, and science of the host regions, as examples such as Zacuto's astrolabe, the Ferrara Bible, the production of other Hebrew books, and the textile industry in Thessaloniki highlight.

As is evident, the Iberian Jewish diaspora, rather than constituting a unidirectional and monolithic population movement, was highly intricate from cultural, religious, and political standpoints. It encompassed various short-lived 'micro-diasporas'.⁴⁸ Such groups merit detailed study by means of archive work to provide more information on the strategies they used to integrate and on their settlement in their new environments.

4. MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN EXILE

The term 'Sefarad', which provides the title for this chapter, is ancient in origin and was in use before exile. As Edward Peters explains, *Sefarad* first appears in the *Book of Obadiah* and means the most distant northern point of Jewish migration in Syria, in other words a "refuge remote from Palestine".⁴⁹ This ancient interpretation would change in meaning over time, such that during exile *Sefarad* and *Sephardic* transforming while in exile into concepts associated with a new "imagined community"⁵⁰ in exile. Nostalgia for Sefarad, during the Modern Era, would have a similar position to nostalgia for Jerusalem for the successive generations of Jews of Iberian origin born in exile.

Sephardic culture, built from the epistemic perspective of exodus, therefore encompasses the identity forged outside of Iberia after 1492. In other words, it includes Jews and *conversos* of Spanish and Portuguese origin and from the south of France alongside the mixing with other Jews and *conversos* who associated with this diaspora as it expanded and merged in exile. As with all identities, it is tremendously elastic and varied and is subject to processes of change and transculturation linked to other communities. That is to say, the cultural development and outlook of Iberian Jews who settled in Tangiers, Tetouan, or Casablanca and spoke in Haketia would not be the same as it was for those exiles who started a new life in Ottoman Thessaloniki, Amsterdam, or Curaçao.

⁴⁸ J. Ray, *New Approaches to the Jewish Diaspora*...

⁴⁹ E. Peters, *Jewish History and Gentile Memory*..., p. 9.

⁵⁰ In this case I adopt Benedict Anderson's concept of 'imagined community', B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London 1991.

Despite the evident diversity in the Sephardic community, throughout the Early Modern Era it would be possible to observe some similar characteristics in the early generations of exiles:

The language: A fundamental feature of Sephardic identity in many cases is the shared language. The fact that some exiles, after several generations, still used Judaeo-Romance languages such as Ladino, Judaeo-Portuguese, Catalan, Spanish, and Shaudit, as well as other Arabic-influenced Romance languages such as Haketia or Berber, in addition to Hebrew, would foster connections and serve as the foundation for a distinct identity compared to other groups. Besides, language contact in exile will eventually lead to the emergence of various dialectal variants with a local character over time.⁵¹

The lost home: This does not mean that all exiles wished to return to Portugal, Castille, Aragon, or any other place they regarded as a lost region or homeland, but in many cases works written in exile would display nostalgia for Sefarad that was reminiscent of the usual nostalgia for Jerusalem. This process often creates a mythical and idealized image of the lost homeland.

Community in adaptation: In the Iberian kingdoms, Jews lived their lives in administrative units and within local and regional networks. This model would be replicated after the Alhambra Decree, as many references to place of origin appear in the documentation, rather than to a Sephardic or Hispanic origin. Despite many migrants using a common language there are no references to belonging to a single "nation". This would mean that amid the chaos of exile it was practically impossible to organise the same communities away from the original *aljama*. It should not be forgotten that the Alhambra Decree was followed by many other decrees in other kingdoms. Existing networks in Iberia with their consequent hierarchies and clientele would disappear in most cases, even if contacts with the community of origin did continue after the expulsion.

In summary, the memory of their exact origin and the importance of a unique identity began to take shape in the second half of the 16th century, emerging as an 'invented' group identity that largely overshadowed prior ethnic and community identities.

While the expulsion gave rise to a particular collective memory, it does not imply the existence of a robust tradition of chronicles in the preceding period. Historiography had limited significance in medieval Judaism, with little emphasis placed on chronicling historical events. As Enrique Cantera notes, historiographical works in the Jewish-Hebrew tradition were very limited

⁵¹ L. Minervi, F. Savelsberg, *New Perspectives on Judeo-Spanish and the Linguistic History of the Sephardic Jews*, Leiden 2024 (= *Studies in Language, Cognition and Culture* 41).

from the time of Flavius Josephus until well into the 19th century.⁵² However, the series of expulsions that Jewish communities in Western Europe were subjected to after the Alhambra Decree resulted in a particularly rich body of work, primarily consisting of writings seeking an explanation for what had occurred.

Eyewitnesses to the expulsion, such as the above-mentioned Abraham Zacuto, Solomon Ibn Verga, and Samuel Usque, would be followed by other chroniclers such as Abraham ben Selomon ibn Torrutiel, Elijah Capsali, Joseph ha-Kohen, and Azariah dei Rossi, to mention just a few names. They all wrote in exile, addressing the reasons for their displacement. These intellectuals often interpreted the misfortune of their people as divine punishment for excessive rationalism and a lack of respect for tradition. *The Sceptre of Judah* by Ibn Verga goes further, as in his exile (first in Naples and then in the Ottoman Empire), the author accuses Jews of excessive pride, a desire for wealth, and poor dietary practices, presenting these as the ultimate causes of the expulsion.⁵³

In the opening pages of *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, Harold Bloom, the author of the preface, makes an interesting comparison between the approach of classical Greek historiography to the past and the way Jewish chronicles address memory. Using a classic definition from the German philosopher Hannah Arendt, he explains the Greek concept of history and the Hebrew rejection of it, interpreting the Greek focus on the greatness of man - prominent in Greek historiography and poetry - as rooted in the intimate connection between man and nature, and man's eventual dominance over it. In contrast, Jewish memory is based on the idea that life is the most sacred of all things, and that memory is a powerful means of recognizing that value.⁵⁴ This contrast is extremely useful for understanding the Hebrew concept of *Zakhor*, which Yerushalmi explains in detail in his work.

Zakhor has a different value to memory as the word in Hebrew also implies action. It is therefore a matter of active memory. As Alejandro Baer explains, "in Judaism there is interest in the past with regard to the discussion of new meanings that can be gleaned from it".⁵⁵ In that regard, returning to Arendt's idea, what is of interest in the chronicles and in Jewish historiography is not so much addressing the facts of the past and the greatness of a certain event but rather the analysis of what that event means. In the specific case of the expulsion, the interest lies in knowing why and how the events can be interpreted. The interest is, therefore, not in presenting the facts that happened in the past objectively

52 E. Cantera Montenegro, *La historiografía hispano-hebrea*, "Espacio, Tiempo y Forma, Serie III, Historia Medieval" 15 (2002), pp. 53-55.

53 Ibidem.

54 Y.H. Yerushalmi, *Zakhor. Jewish history and Jewish memory*, Seattle 1996, p. XV.

55 A. Baer, *El testimonio audiovisual: imagen y memoria del Holocausto*, CIS, Siglo XXI, Madrid 2005, p. 97.

and heroically, instead it is in drawing a religious teaching. The issue is not remembering history but rather ensuring that the law (*Halakha*) is not forgotten as this is what creates a sense of identity and destiny for the Jewish people.⁵⁶

ABSTRACT

The article examines the formation of the Sephardic diaspora following the expulsion of Jews from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492, focusing on migration routes to Portugal and Naples. This process, initiated by the Alhambra Decree, marks a pivotal moment in the history of European Jewry, where Jewish communities faced the choice of converting to Christianity or emigrating. The author explores the impact of this mass migration on the culture, economy, and social structures of destination regions, delving into the conditions of acceptance in Portugal and Naples and the subsequent restrictions on religious freedom. Special attention is given to the adaptation of Jewish migrants and their integration into new environments, including interactions between Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities.

The paper also discusses the mechanisms of identity formation in the diaspora, highlighting the role of language, nostalgia for the lost "Sefarad", and the evolving communal structures. Drawing on archival documentation and chronicles, the author reconstructs the process of forging a collective memory that gave meaning to the traumatic experiences of expulsion and life in foreign lands. Examples such as Hebrew printing in Naples and the contributions of Sephardic scholars to the advancement of science and literature illustrate the significant impact of this community on the economic and cultural fabric of destination regions.

The article concludes with reflections on the concept of "zakhor" - active memory - which became the foundation of Sephardic identity and allowed the community to endure dispersion and transculturation processes in the diaspora.

Keywords: Sephardic diaspora, 1492 expulsion, Naples and Portugal, Jewish identity, "Zakhor" and collective memory

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56 Ibidem, passim.

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DAS FÜRSTENTUM MOLDAU IN DEN AUGEN SEINER NACHBARN, POLENS, UNGARNS UND DES OSMANISCHEN REICHS, IM SPÄTEN MITTELALTER UND IN DER FRÜHEN NEUZEIT



Mit der wachsenden Macht der Türken und der von diesen begonnenen Expansion auf europäisches Gebiet wurde das Osmanische Reich in der Vorstellung der mittelalterlichen Menschen zur größten Bedrohung für die Christen. So wurde Ende des 15. Jhs. der Begriff *Antemurale Christianitatis* üblich, um Länder zu bezeichnen, die sich in unmittelbarer Gefahr eines türkischen Angriffs befanden, also zunächst Malta, Kreta und später die Donaufürstentümer Moldau und Walachei. In ihrer Korrespondenz mit den Herrschern anderer Länder betonten die Fürsten dieser Territorien häufig ihre Rolle als Bollwerke, als Verteidiger des Christentums: Der Fürst von Moldau bezeichnete seinen Staat als Schutzwall Polens und Ungarns,¹ während Sultan Bayezid II. selbst die damaligen moldauischen Städte Kilia als Tor zu Moldau und Ungarn sowie die Stadt Akerman (poln. Bialogród, rumän. Cetatea Albă) als Tor zu Polen, Ruthenien und dem Krimkhanat bezeichnete.² Auch die polnischen und ungarischen Herrscher waren sich dessen bewusst, und

¹ *Documentele lui Stefan cel Mare*, hg. v. I. Bogdan, Bd. 2, București 1913, Nr. 143, 154, P. Srodecki, *Antemurale Christianitatis. Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetotik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit*, Matthiesen Verlag, Husum 2015, S. 233.

² *Acta et epistolae relationum Transilvaniae Hungariae cum Moldavia et Valachia*, hg. v. E. Veress, Bd. 1 (weiter: Veress), S. 38–39; P. Srodecki, *Antemurale...*, S. 231.

so befanden sich die Moldau und die Walachei seit dem Fall Konstantinopels und dem Beginn der türkischen Expansion in Europa in ihrer Interessensphäre, wobei Polen seine Aufmerksamkeit stärker auf die Moldau richtete. Die Konsolidierung des polnischen und ungarischen Einflusses in beiden Fürstentümern sollte die Gefahr vor einem möglichen türkischen Angriff verringern. Moldau und die Walachei sollten in der Tat eine Art Verteidigungspuffer für die mitteleuropäischen Staaten darstellen. Aus demselben Grund war Moldau auch für die Türken wichtig. Allerdings wurden die Fürsten in der Regel recht negativ wahrgenommen. Ich werde einige Beispiele anführen, um dieses Bild von Moldau und seinen Hospodaren in den Augen der Zeitgenossen zu reflektieren.

Der erste Hospodar, den ich hervorheben möchte, ist Stephan der Große (1457–1504), der als einer der herausragendsten moldauischen Herrscher gilt. Er wurde als hervorragender Strategie und Politiker bekannt, der erfolgreich mit dem wachsenden türkischen, ungarischen und polnischen Einfluss umging. In den Augen seiner Zeitgenossen wurden er und seine Moldau jedoch weit weniger gut wahrgenommen. Der moldauische Fürst war sich der strategischen Lage seines Staates bewusst und nutzte diese Situation aus. So bat er Europa um Hilfe im Kampf gegen die Türken, beschwor die Solidarität der orthodoxen Christen und nannte Moldau „das Tor zum Christentum“³ oder bezeichnete sie (wie in einem Brief an Iwan III.) als eine Insel inmitten von Heiden und solchen, die sich „Christen nennen, aber keine sind“.⁴ Der Hospodar wurde als unzuverlässig wahrgenommen, der zwischen verschiedenen Seiten hin und her schwankte, und sein Fürstentum wurde als ein unsicheres Gebiet angesehen. Dies war jedoch kein Spezifikum seiner Herrschaft, sondern ein charakteristisches Merkmal der Haltung der moldauischen Herrscher. Die Türken zum Beispiel teilten die Welt in zwei Teile: *dariilkefere* oder *dariilharb*, d. h. die Welt der Ungläubigen oder der Feinde, und *dariilIslam*, d. h. die Welt der Anhänger des Islam.⁵ Zur ersten Gruppe gehörten die Staaten, die nicht in der Lage waren, dem Osmanischen Reich Frieden zu garantieren. Der Begriff „Feinde“ umfasst also nicht unbedingt alle christlichen oder nicht-islamischen Staaten, sondern nur diejenigen, deren

3 *Documentele lui Ștefan cel Mare...*, hg. v. I. Bogdan, Bd. 2, Nr. 143, 154; P. Srodecki, *Antemurale...*, S. 233.

4 *Relațiile istorice dintre popoarele U.R.S.S. și România în veacurile XV – începutul celui de al XVIII-lea*, Bd. 1 (1408-1632), hg. v. „Știința”, Moskwa 1965, S. 61–63; S. Gorovei, M. Szekely, *Princeps omni laude maior. O istorie lui Ștefan cel Mare*, Musatinii 2005, S. 124–132; L. Pilat, *Between Ottoman Empire and Latin Christendom: Moldavia as Frontier Society in the Late Middle Ages*, in: *Europe and the “Ottoman world”: Exchanges and Conflicts (16th-17th centuries)*, hg. v. R.G. Păun, G. Karman, Isis Press, Istanbul 2013, S. 186.

5 V. Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War and Peace. The Ottoman Empire and Tribute Payers*, New York 2000, S. 83–84.

Stellung gegenüber dem Osmanischen Reich unsicher war. Nach diesem Prinzip gehörten die Staaten, die Tribut zahlten, in der Regel nicht zur Gruppe der *darülkefere*. *DarülIslam* ist definiert als ein Gebiet unter der Herrschaft eines Sultans, in dem die Freiheit besteht, sich zum Islam zu bekennen, sich auf seine Praktiken zu beziehen und nach seinen Regeln zu leben.⁶ Sowohl die Moldau als auch die Walachei hatten vom 14. bis 16. Jh. in den Quellen den Status eines *Darülkefere*, obwohl sie die meiste Zeit über Tribut an die Türken zahlten.⁷ Ihre Position war so unsicher, dass sie den nachfolgenden Sultanen kein Vertrauen einflößte,⁸ auch wenn es nach türkischem Recht keinen Krieg mit ihnen geben konnte, da sie Tribut zahlten.⁹ Ein bezeichnendes Beispiel für dieses leichtfertige Verhalten des Moldauer Hospodars war die Frage der Hommage, die er fast gleichzeitig an Ungarn und Polen sandte. Nun, nach der türkischen Expedition gegen Moldau und der Einnahme der Schwarzmeerhäfen Kilia und Akkerman im Jahr 1484 fühlte sich Stefan der Große direkt bedroht. Zunächst zählte er auf die Unterstützung des ungarischen Königs Matthias Corvinus, doch dieser schloss 1483 – noch vor der Expedition des Sultans nach Moldau – einen fünfjährigen Waffenstillstand mit dem Osmanischen Reich, der Moldau nicht einschloss.¹⁰ Erst nach der Einnahme von Kilia und Akkerman schickte er ein Protestschreiben an den Sultan, in welchem er diesen beschuldigte, das Gebiet eines ungarischen Lehens zu verletzen.¹¹ Der enttäuschte moldauische Fürst wandte sich an Kasimir den Jagiellonen und bot ihm seine Huldigung an. Daraufhin brach die polnische Expedition auf, was damit endete, dass Stefan der Große dem polnischen König in Kolomyja huldigte¹² (die Urkunde wurde am 15. September 1485 ausgestellt, während

⁶ Ibidem, S. 84.

⁷ Muhammad ibn al-Hasan ach-Chaibani, *Le grand Livre de la Conduite de l'Etat* (Kitab as-Siyar al-Kabir). Commente par as-Sarakhsi, hg. v. M. Hamidullah, Bd. 4/17, Ankara 1991, S. 218; V. Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War...*, S. 84.

⁸ V. Panaite, *The Legal and Political Status of Wallachia and Moldavia in Relation to the Ottoman Porte*, in: *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth–Seventeenth Centuries*, hg. v. G. Karman, L. Kunčević, Leiden 2013, S. 11, Anm. 3; V. Panaite, *The Ottoman Law of War...*, S. 83.

⁹ V. Panaite, *The Legal and Political Status of Wallachia and Moldavia...*, S. 12, 13.

¹⁰ I. Czamańska, *Moldawia i Wołoszczyzna...*, S. 150; O. Cristea, *Matthias Corvin et l'expédition de Bazeyid II contre la Moldavie (1484)*, „Revue. Romaine d'Histoire” 42 (2003), 1–4, S. 81–88; A. Simon, *The Ottoman-Hungarian Crisis of 1484: Diplomacy and Warfare in Matthias Corvinus' Local and Regional Politics*, in: *Matthias and his legacy*, hg. v. A. Barany, A. Gyorkos, Debrecen 2009, S. 405–436; idem, *The Western impact of Eastern events: The crusader consequences of the Fall of Caffa in the light of new Italian sources*, „Revue Roumaine d'Histoire” (2011), S. 369–382.

¹¹ I. Czamańska, *Moldawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, Poznań 1996, S. 150.

¹² I. Czamańska, *Moldawia i Wołoszczyzna...*, S. 151; L. Pilat, *The 1487 crusade: A turning Point in the Moldavian-Polish Relations*, „Medieval and Early Modern Studies for Eastern and Central Europe” 2 (2010), S. 125; J. Skoczek, *Legenda Kallimacha w Polsce*, Lwów 1939, S. 28–29;

die Zeremonie einen Tag später stattfand: am 16. September).¹³ Das Ergebnis war ein gemeinsamer Feldzug gegen die Armee des Sultans, die den moldauischen Thronanwärter Horonda unterstützte, der mit einem Sieg bei Katlabuh endete.¹⁴ Trotz dieses Erfolges war Stefan mit dem Ausmaß der polnischen Unterstützung nicht zufrieden, so dass er es nicht versäumte, einen Vertrag mit den Osmanen zu schließen.¹⁵ Eine weitere große Enttäuschung für den Hospodar war die Expedition von Kasimir den Jagiellonen im Jahr 1487 (unter der Führung von Johann I. Albrecht), die sich entgegen den Ankündigungen nicht als antitürkischer Kreuzzug, sondern als Expedition gegen die Tataren entpuppte, die am 8. September 1487 mit einem Sieg bei Kopystrzyn endete.¹⁶ Diese Expedition bestärkte den Hospodar in seiner Überzeugung, dass er in seinem Kampf gegen die Osmanen nicht auf polnische Unterstützung zählen konnte. Infolgedessen bat der Hospodar den Papst 1488, den polnisch-moldauischen Vertrag aufzuheben und Ungarn zu schützen. Der Papst stimmte dem offenbar zu, denn der polnische König beklagte sich in einem Schreiben vom 26. Juni 1489, dass Moldau seinem Schutz entzogen worden sei.¹⁷ So huldigte Stephan der Große innerhalb von fünf Jahren (1484–1489) zunächst dem ungarischen, dann dem polnischen Herrscher, schloss dann

S. Papacostea, *De la Colomeea la Codrul Cosminului (Poziția internațională a Moldovei la sfârșitul secolului al XV-lea)* in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Portret în istorie*, Putna 2004, S. 469.

13 I. Czamańska, *Moldawia i Wołoszczyzna...*, S. 151; Zentralarchiv für historische Aufzeichnungen in Warschau (Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych, weiter: AGAD), dok. Perg 5405; gedruckt: Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 2, S. 710, 711.

14 *Psovskie Letopisi*, ed. A.N. Nasnova, Moskva 1955, Bd. 2, S. 67; L. Pilat, *The 1487 crusade: A turning Point...*, S. 128; A. Pippidi, *O solie din Moldova la Veneția*, in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Atlet al credinței creștine*, Putna 2004, S. 507; O. Cristea, *Campania din 1484 în lumina unor noi izvoare venețiene*, in *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Atlet al credinței creștine*, Putna 2004, S. 212, 213, 267.

15 I. Czamańska, *Moldawia i Wołoszczyzna...*, S. 154, 155; S. Gorovei, *Pacea moldo-otomană din 1486. Observații pe marginea unor texte*, in: *Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt. Portret în istorie...*, S. 496–515; O. Cristea, *Pacea din 1486 și relațiile lui Ștefan cel Mare cu Imperiul Otoman în ultima parte a domniei*, „Revista de Istorie” 15 (2004), 3–4, S. 25–36.

16 *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, hg. v. T. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke, Leipzig 1866, Bd. 4 (weiter: SRPr), S. 767, 768; M. Bielski, *Kronika polska Marcina Bielskiego nowo przez Joachima Bielskiego syna jego wydana*, Kraków 1597, S. 882, 883; *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, Bd. 3, hg. v. A. Sokołowski, J. Szujski, A. Lewicki, Kraków 1884, S. 341, Nr. 322; L. Pilat, *The 1487 crusade: A turning Point...*, S. 131; N. Nowakowska, *Poland and the Crusade in the Reign of King Jan Olbracht, 1492–1501*, in: *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, hg. v. N. Housley, [Palgrave Macmillan] 2004, S. 130.

17 Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 2, S. 316, Nr. 281; L. Pilat, *The 1487 crusade: A turning Point...*, S. 133. Die erneute Abhängigkeit Moldaus von Ungarn wird 1490 durch den Chronisten Kaspar Weinreich bestätigt, der die fehlende Unterstützung des polnischen Königs in den moldauischen Kämpfen gegen die Türkei als Grund für die Abkehr Moldaus von Polen angibt: *Caspar Weinreich's Danziger Chronik: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte Danzigs, der Lande Preussen und Polen, des Hansabundes und der Nordischen Reiche*, hg. v. Th. Hirsch, F.A. Vossberg, *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum*, Bd. 4, Berlin 1855, S. 778, 779.

ein Bündnis mit den Türken und verlangte schließlich die Aufhebung der Huldigung von Kasimir dem Jagiellonen, um sich erneut unter ungarischen Schutz zu stellen. Nicht umsonst galt der Hospodar als eine unzuverlässige Person, die noch dazu ein strategisch so wichtiges Gebiet verwaltete.

Der Nachfolger von Kasimir den Jagiellonen, Johann I. Albrecht, hatte eine noch schlechtere Meinung vom Hospodar als sein Vorgänger. Als Kind wurde er nach Podolien mitgenommen, um die vom Hospodar angerichteten Schäden zu sehen.¹⁸ Als er die Herrschaft übernahm, beabsichtigte er sogar, Stefan aus diesem strategisch wichtigen Gebiet zu entfernen und es seinem Bruder Sigismund zu übergeben, der von seinem Vater kein Land zur Verwaltung erhalten hatte und notorisch von seinen Brüdern verlangte, dass sie ihm ein solches Territorium zuwiesen, was ihnen ernste Probleme bereitete.¹⁹ Johann I. Albrecht teilte diese Idee Vladislav II. von Böhmen und Ungarn während einer Versammlung in Levoca im Jahr 1494 mit, stieß aber auf dessen erbitterten Widerstand, denn dieser wollte sich nur ungern auf ein solches Vorhaben einlassen und fürchtete die Türken. Es scheint jedoch, dass Johann I. Albrecht seinen Plan, den Hospodar vom moldauischen Thron zu stürzen, nicht aufgab und ihn heimlich während des Bukowina-Feldzugs in die Tat umsetzen wollte, als er Moldau angriff. Seiner Ansicht nach sollte ein strategisch so wichtiges Gebiet nicht in den Händen eines solchen Rechtsbrechers liegen.²⁰ Während des jagiellonischen Konvents in Parczew 1496, auf dem die Bedrohung Polens und Litauens diskutiert wurde,²¹ wurden Stefan der Große und der tatarische Khan Mengli Girej als Feinde des Großherzogtums bezeichnet.²² Insbesondere verschlechterte sich die Meinung über Stefan den Großen in den Augen der Polen nach der Schlacht von Koźmin im Jahr 1497, als Stefan dem polnischen König und seinen Truppen

18 *Liborius Nakers Tagebuch über den Kriegszug des Hochmeisters Johann von Tiefen gegen die Türken im Jahre 1497*, in: *Scriptores rerum Prussicarum*, Bd. 5, hg. v. T. Hirsch, M. Töeppen, E. Strehle, Leipzig 1874, S. 306, 307.

19 T. Narbutt, *Pomniki do dziejów litewskich pod względem historycznym, dyplomatycznym, geograficznym itp.*, Wilno 1846, S. 63; *Akty odnoszące się do historii Zapadnoej Rossnii sobranojei izdanoje archeograficeskoju komissieju*, Bd. 1, St. Petersburg 1846, Nr. 135, 136; S. Lukas, *O rzekomej wyprawie na Turka z r. 1497*, *Album uczącej się młodzieży polskiej*, Lwów 1879, S. 7–11; F. Papée, *Jan Olbracht*, Kraków 1999, S. 111.

20 Mehr zu diesem Thema: K. Niemczyk, *Moldau in polnischer und ungarischer Politik. Das Treffen in Levoca 1494, „Codrul Cosminului”* 21 (2015), 1, passim; K. Niemczyk, *Antemurale Christianitatis? Propaganda antytyurecka a wyprawa Jana Olbrachta z 1497 r. w świetle źródeł*, *„Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Prace Historyczne”* (2019), 1, S. 43–61.

21 *Suprasl'skaâ rukopis': soderžašaâ novgorodskuû i kievskuû sokrašennyâ letopisi*, hg. v. M.A. Obolenskij, Moskwa 1836, S. 143; *Sbornik Imperatorskogo Russkogo Istoriceskogo Obszczestwa*, Bd. 35, hg. v. S. Biełokurow, St. Petersburg 1882, S. 225; L. Kolankowski, *Dzieje Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego za Jagiellonów*, Bd. 1: 1377–1499, Warszawa 1930, S. 386.

22 *Sbornik...*, S. 225; L. Kolankowski, *Dzieje Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego...*, S. 386.

auf dem Rückweg nach Polen zwar „gute“ Ratschläge gab, sie aber absichtlich in einen Hinterhalt führte.²³ Die Moldau war also sowohl für die polnische als auch für die ungarische und die türkische Seite ein in strategischer Hinsicht bedeutsames Gebiet, aber Stefan der Große hatte den Ruf, unzuverlässig, ein Gesetzesbrecher und sogar ein Feind des Königreichs zu sein; Johann I. Albrecht hegte sogar den Plan, ihn vom Thron zu stürzen und durch Sigismund zu ersetzen.

Nach dem Tod Stephans des Großen übernahm sein Sohn Bogdan, genannt *cel Orb și Grozav*, die Macht im Fürstentum Moldau. Er hatte sowohl international als auch innenpolitisch eine deutlich schwächere Position. Er strebte danach, seine Position zu stärken und einen soliden Verbündeten zu finden, anstatt einen Krieg gegen Polen zu führen. Zu diesem Zweck beschloss er, Pokutien (das umstrittene Gebiet zwischen Polen und Moldau; poln. *Pokucie*) zu nutzen, das er Alexander Jagiellon kampflos im Tausch gegen die Hand seiner Schwester Elisabeth anbot.²⁴ Der Hospodar wollte damit einen soliden Verbündeten gewinnen und seine Position auf der internationalen Bühne

23 Es gibt einen grundlegenden Unterschied in der Beschreibung dieser Ereignisse durch polnische und türkische Quellen. In den polnischen Quellen, die über den Feldzug gegen die Türken und nicht gegen Moldau berichten, heißt es, Stefan habe den polnischen König schützen wollen, damit er nicht in die türkische Armee gerät. In den türkischen Quellen heißt es dagegen, er habe die polnischen Truppen absichtlich in eine Falle gelockt. Inzwischen kommt I. Czamańska (auf der Grundlage der Forschungen von C. Rezachevici) zu dem Schluss, dass es in der Tat nur eine Straße gab, nämlich die durch die Wälder von Koźmin, so dass Stefan Albrecht in einen Hinterhalt geführt haben muss: M. Bielski, *Kronika polska...*, S. 484; *Kromera biskupa warmińskiego ksiąg XXX dotąd w trzech językach, a mianowicie w łacińskim, polskim i niemieckim wydana, na język polski z łacińskiego przełożona przez Marcina z Błażowa Błażowskiego i wydana w Krakowie w drukarni M. Loba r. 1611, Sanok 1857*, S. 1328-1333; Maciej z Miechowa, *Chronica Polonoru[m]* [Na końcu:] (Habes lector [...]) 4 [słow.] *libros Chronicorum regni Poloniae a domino Miechoviensi editos [...]*, Kraków 1521, cap. 75, S. 350; B. Wapowski, *Dzieje Korony Polskiej i Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego od roku 1380 do 1535*, Bd. 3, hg. v. M. Malinowski, Wilno 1848 (weiter: Wapowski), S. 24–29; R.F. Kreutel, *Der fromme Sultan Bayezid. Die Geschichte seiner Herrschaft (1481–1512) nach den altosmanischen Chroniken des Oruc und des Anonymus Hanivaldanus*, Graz–Wien–Köln 1978 (= Osmanische Geschichtsschreiber 9), S. 92–98; H. J. Kissling, *Die anonyme altosmanische Chronik über Sultan Bajezid II*, in: *Dissertationes orientales et balcanicae collectae II, Sultan Bajezid II Und der Westen*, hg. v. J.J. Kissling, München 1988, S. 185; O. Cristea, *The Friend of My Friend and the Enemy of My enemy: Romanian Participation in Ottoman Campaigns*, in: *The European Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire in the 16th–17th Centuries*, hg. v. G. Karman, L. Kunčević, Leiden 2013, S. 259, 260; I. Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna w stosunkach polsko-tureckich w XV–XVII wieku, „Balcanica Posnaniensia”* 4 (1989), S. 303; C. Rezachevici, D. Căpățina, *Campania lui Ștefan cel Mare din 1497 împotriva regelui Ioan Albert. Bătălia din Cadrul Cosminului*, București 1975 (= File din istoria militară a poporului roman 3), S. 38–70; K. Niemczyk, *Antemurale Christianitatis? Propaganda antyturecka a wyprawa Jana Olbrachta z 1497 r. w świetle źródeł*, ZNUJ 2019, S. 43–61.

24 *Akta Aleksandra króla polskiego, wielkiego księcia litewskiego (1501 – 1506)*, hg. v. F. Papée, Kraków 1927 (weiter: AAleks), Nr. 257, *Matricularum Regni Poloniae Summaria*, Bd. 3, hg. v. T. Wierzbowski, Warszawa 1908 (weiter: MRPS III), Nr. 2048; Z. Spieralski, *Z dziejów wojen...*, S. 105–108.

stärken. Obwohl Alexander dieses Angebot verlockend fand, stieß es bei seiner Anwärtlerin Elisabeth auf heftigen Widerstand, die laut Bernard Wapowski schwor, dass sie lieber in ein Kloster eintreten würde, als einen „einäugigen Barbaren“ zu heiraten.²⁵ Er war auch bei einem großen Teil des polnischen Adels unbeliebt, die befürchteten, dass ein mögliches Bündnis mit Moldau Polen in einen Konflikt mit dem Osmanischen Reich hineinziehen würde.²⁶ Auch die polnischen Adligen verachteten Bogdan und hielten ihn für einen Barbaren. Auch die Haltung Groß- und Kleinpolens gegenüber Moldau war nicht einheitlich. Denn während es für Großpolen ein peripheres Gebiet darstellte, das nicht wert war, einbezogen zu werden, und für das man nicht an Kraft und Geld verlieren wollte, war es für die Bevölkerung von Klempolen ein wichtiges Gebiet, weil es die Möglichkeit bot, neue Ländereien zu gewinnen und durch den Erwerb neuer Ämter Karriere zu machen.²⁷ Bogdan wurde auch von Elisabeth von Habsburg (poln. Elżbieta Rakusanka) als völlig unwürdiger Kandidat für Elisabeths Hand angesehen.²⁸

Auch die Moldau unter der Herrschaft von Bogdans Nachfolger, Stefan dem Jungen, erschien nicht als ein stabiles Land und der Hospodar nicht als vertrauenswürdiger Mann. Im Gegenteil, Stefans doppeltes Spiel war bekannt. Sigismund der Alte nannte ihn in seinen Briefen an Ludwig von Ungarn einen Tyrannen, eine Bestie, eine Plage und eine Schlange.²⁹

²⁵ Wapowski, S. 62, 63, 279.

²⁶ Z. Spieralski, *Z dziejów wojen...*, S. 110.

²⁷ Die unterschiedlichen Positionen der Groß- und Klempolen in Bezug auf die moldauische Politik wurden besonders deutlich bei den Grenzkonventionen Alexanders mit dem Hospodar. Für die Klempolen war der Verbleib von Pokutien bei Polen von entscheidender Bedeutung, und sie lehnten die Möglichkeit von Verhandlungen mit Stefan grundlegend ab, während für die Großpolen Pokutien ein so weit entferntes, unbekanntes und unwichtiges Land war, dass sie keinen Sinn darin sahen, Zeit und Geld für den Versuch zu verschwenden, es für Polen zu sichern. Deshalb verlangten sie, dass so bald wie möglich ein Gesandter zu Stefan dem Großen geschickt werde, um sich zu einer vereinbarten Grenzkonvention zu treffen und die Frage der Zugehörigkeit des Gebiets friedlich zu lösen, egal mit welchem Ergebnis, siehe: AGAD, Libri Legationum (weiter: LL) 1, k. 35v–36 v = AAleks, nr 96 ac; Antwort von Alexander, siehe: AGAD, LL 1, k. 37–38 = AAleks, Nr. 96 b = *Materialy dlia istorii vzaimnych otnošenij Rossii, Polši, Moldavii, Valachii i Turcii v XIV–XVI w.*, hg. v. V.A. Uljanicki, Moskva 1887, S. 203, 204; Z. Spieralski, *Z dziejów wojen...*, S. 83; AAleks, Nr. 93; J. Wiesiołowski, *Ambroży Pampowski – starosta Jagiellonów*, Wrocław 1976, S. 84; Z. Spieralski, *Z dziejów wojen...*, S. 85, 86; R. Trawka, *Kmitowie. Studium kariery politycznej i społecznej w późnośredniowiecznej Polsce*, Kraków 2005, S. 260.

²⁸ Diese Haltung der Königin wurde dem Hospodar mitgeteilt. Der Hospodar, besorgt über eine solche Haltung der Königin, beschloss, sie durch einen Mann zu überzeugen, der zu den Vertrauenspersonen der Königin gehörte – Stanislav von Chodecz: ADAD, LL 2, k. 48–49; AAleks, Nr. 294; A. Borzemski, *Sprawa pokucka...*, S. 378; Z. Spieralski, *Z dziejów wojen...*, S. 108.

²⁹ *Acta Tomiciana: epistolarum, legationum, responsorum, actionum et rerum gestarum, serenissimi principis Sigismundi primi, Regis Poloniae, magni ducis Lithuaniae per Stanislaum Górski canonicum Cracoviensem et Plocensem collectarum* A.D. 1532, Bd. 6, hg. v. S. Górski, Poznań 1857 (weiter: ATo-mic 6), Nr. 280; Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 3, Nr. 305.

Kein polnisch-moldauisches Abkommen garantierte beiden Seiten Sicherheit. Vielmehr waren damals diplomatische Kniffe an der Tagesordnung, bei denen man das eine sagte und etwas ganz anderes tat. Ein gutes Beispiel hierfür sind die politischen Arrangements während der Herrschaft Stephans des Jungen. Bereits 1519 (7. März) kamen ungarische Abgeordnete zum Sejm in Piotrków und baten Sigismund I. um Unterstützung für Moldau gegen die Türken, die einen Angriff auf den Hospodar planten.³⁰ Noch am selben Tag antwortete Sigismund I. den Abgeordneten, dass er Moldau selbstverständlich eine solche Unterstützung zukommen lassen werde.³¹ In der Zwischenzeit, am 21. Juni, schickten die Woiwoden der Moldau und der Walachei den Gesandten Antonio Paicalas zu Papst Leo X., um diesen um Unterstützung zu bitten und ihm gleichzeitig Hilfe gegen die Türken zu versprechen. Der Papst versicherte ihnen, dass sie im Falle eines Vertrages zwischen dem Papst und den Türken immer als Verbündete behandelt werden würden.³² Gleichzeitig wurde im selben Jahr der ungarisch-türkische Frieden geschlossen, in dem Ludwig II. die Moldau und die Walachei verpflichtete, der Türkei Tribut zu zahlen.³³ Am 1. Oktober wiederum wurde der polnisch-türkische Frieden zwischen Sigismund I. und Selim um drei Jahre verlängert.³⁴

Der Hospodar blieb nicht verschuldet, und auf dessen Loyalität konnte man sich unter keinen Umständen verlassen. Er verpflichtete sich, die Herrscher Polens und Ungarns über türkische Vorstöße zu informieren,

30 *Documente privitoare la istoria românilor culese de E. de Hurmuzaki*, București 1893 (weiter: Hurmuzaki), Bd. 2, Teil 3, Nr. 233.

31 Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 3, Nr. 234; während desselben Sejms wurde eine Steuer von $\frac{1}{4}$ Gulden von jedem Rumänen, der sich in Polen aufhält, für den Unterhalt des stehenden Heeres in Ruthenien beschlossen, Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 3, Nr. 232.

32 Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 3, Nr. 224.

33 Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 1, Nr. 31.

34 AGAD, AKW, dz.tur., k. 66, Bd. 17, Nr. 36 = *Inventarium omnium et singulorum privilegiorum, litterarum, diplomatum, scripturarum et monumentorum, quaecunque in archivo Regni in Arce Cracoviensi continentur*, hg. v. E. Rykaczewski, Lutetiae Parisiorum–Berolini–Posnaniae 1862 (weiter: Inventarium), S. 144. Im Regest heißt es fälschlicherweise, dass das Dokument von Soliman ausgestellt wurde, was vom Herausgeber korrigiert wurde, Teki Naruszewicza in Die Czartoryski-Bibliothek in Krakau (weiter: TN) 34, Nr. 71; LL 5, k. 58v–59, 59–59v, 59v–60; siehe auch: Antwort von Selim I. auf das Schreiben von Sigismund I. über die Verlängerung des Friedens um drei Jahre, vorgelegt von Jakub Secygniowski: AGAD, AKW, dz.tur., k. 66, Bd. 16, Nr. 35. Im Gegenzug schickte Selim I. am 25. November 1519 seinen Gesandten Chalkokandyles nach Moskau, um Waren zu holen. Auf dem Weg dorthin bat er den polnischen König, ihm eine sichere Durchreise zu gewähren, damit der Sultan seine Rechte gegenüber seinen in Polen lebenden Schuldnern geltend machen könne, siehe: AGAD, AKW, dz.tur., k. 66, Bd. 18, Nr. 39 = *Inventarium omnium et singulorum privilegiorum, litterarum, diplomatum, scripturarum et monumentorum, quaecunque in archivo Regni in Arce Cracoviensi continentur*, hg. v. E. Rykaczewski, Lutetiae Parisiorum–Berolini–Posnaniae 1862 (weiter: Inventarium), S. 144.

unterrichtete aber gleichzeitig den Sultan ausführlich über alle Aktivitäten des polnischen und ungarischen Königs. Ein Beispiel: Im Januar 1520 informierte er Sultan Selim über einen möglichen polnisch-ungarischen Feldzug gegen die Türken. Er schrieb, dass der ungarische Herrscher mit seinen Würdenträgern über eine Expedition im Frühjahr beraten würde, aber Stefan nicht wisse, worum es bei den Gesprächen genau ging. Er berichtet weiter, dass Sigismund I. sich mit den Würdenträgern in Piotrków getroffen habe, aber auch hier Stefan keine Einzelheiten kenne. Dieser habe aber Spione sowohl nach Polen als auch nach Ungarn geschickt und versprochen, den Sultan zu informieren, sobald er etwas erfährt.³⁵ Sigismund der Alte durchschaute das doppelte Spiel des Hospodars und gewährte vorsichtshalber einem Gegenkandidaten für den moldauischen Thron – einem gewissen Peter (nicht identisch mit Peter Rareș), der sich auf der Marienburg aufhielt – Schutz und Unterstützung.³⁶ Gleichzeitig bereitete Sigismund I. im selben Jahr auf der Grundlage von Informationen von Stefan einen Krieg mit den Tataren vor.³⁷ So warnte der Hospodar einerseits Polen vor einem möglichen Tatarenangriff, aber schon zu Beginn des folgenden Jahres (das Dokument stammt aus der ersten Hälfte des Jahres 1521) informierte er den Sultan über dieses Vorgehen (wahrscheinlich, um das Vertrauen Sigismunds zu gewinnen) und lieferte weiterhin Informationen über Polen und Ungarn: Der ungarische König sei in Buda, stelle aber noch kein Heer auf; in Siebenbürgen sammle sich ein Heer, aber Stefan wisse nicht, zu welchem Zweck, während der polnische König ein Heer in der Nähe von Krakau und in Kamieniec aufstelle, das nahe der Moldau liegt. Stefan sei sich jedoch nicht sicher, ob die Armee gegen die Tataren oder gegen Moldau ziehen werde (was bedeute, dass er der polnischen Seite nicht traue). Der tatarische Khan sammle ebenfalls Truppen und wolle möglicherweise Moldau angreifen. Da Stefan weder Polen noch Ungarn traue, habe er sich zum Schutz der Grenzen an den Dnjestr begeben. Stefan bürge für Vorsicht und Besonnenheit und sichere den Türken seine Loyalität zu.³⁸ Ende August und Anfang September übermittelte Stefan dem Sultan weitere Informationen. Er erklärte dem Sultan, warum er die Szekler nicht angegriffen habe. Als türkischer Vasall sei er verpflichtet, die Szekler auf Befehl des Sultans anzugreifen, und er wolle dieser Verpflichtung gerne nachkommen, doch der tatarische Khan wolle Moldau angreifen, weshalb Stefan nicht in einen weiteren Konflikt verwickelt werden könne. Er

35 *Documente Turcești privind Istoria României*, Bd. 1 (1455–1774), hg. v. Mustafa A. Mehmed, București 1976, Nr. 10, (1520, 1521); Z. Spieralski war fälschlicherweise von der entschieden antitürkischen Haltung der Moldau zu dieser Zeit überzeugt, siehe: Z. Spieralski, *Kampania obertyńska...*, S. 85, 86.

36 Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 3, Nr. 243.

37 Ibidem, Nr. 244.

38 *Documente Turcești privind Istoria României...*, Bd. 1, Nr. 11 (erste Hälfte des Jahres 1521).

versichere jedoch seine Loyalität. Er berichtete auch aus Ungarn: Der König sei in Buda und versuche, Truppen zu sammeln. Auch der Gouverneur von Siebenbürgen versuche, Truppen in Hermannstadt zu sammeln, aber der Hospodar wisse nicht, zu welchem Zweck er das tue. Er wisse auch nicht, warum der Pass in den Karpaten geschlossen wurde. Er sagte auch, dass der polnische König in Krakau Truppen sammle und dass er eine Abteilung nach Kamieniec geschickt habe. Als Stefan die Nachricht von der Einnahme Belgrads durch die Türken erhalten habe, sei er sehr glücklich gewesen und habe Gott gebeten, dass er die Feinde der Türken immer besiegen möge.³⁹

In der Zwischenzeit glaubte Sigismund I. offenbar an Stefans gute Absichten, denn er dankte ihm für die Informationen über die Tataren und Türken und bat ihn um weitere Informationen und um Hilfe, falls er sie benötigte. Zugleich informierte er den ungarischen Herrscher.⁴⁰ Er war sich also des doppelten Spiels von Stefan nicht bewusst oder wollte diesen Eindruck erwecken.

Diese Zeit ist also gekennzeichnet vom doppelten Spiel des polnischen und des ungarischen Herrschers, die der Moldau Hilfe gegen die Türken zusicherten und gleichzeitig einen Friedensvertrag mit den Osmanen schlossen; und ebenso zweigleisig agierte der Hospodar, der mit Polen paktierte und gleichzeitig Spione schickte und den Sultan über jeden Schritt Polens und Ungarns informierte. Hinzu kam die Haltung der Grenzposten, die oft ihre eigenen Interessen über jene des Staates stellten, was zu Missverständnissen zwischen Polen und der Moldau führte. Darüber hinaus unterstützte die polnische Seite den moldauischen Thronanwärter Peter, der in Polen Zuflucht fand, und leistete den Bojaren Hilfe, die 1523 einen Aufstand gegen Stefan den Jüngeren anzettelten.⁴¹

Einer der schillerndsten, aber auch umstrittensten Hospodare, der die Wahrnehmung Moldaus in den Augen seiner Nachbarn perfekt illustrierte, ist die Figur des Petru Rareș.⁴²

Die erste Person, deren Meinung über Petru Rareș' Moldauer Fürstentum ich erörtern möchte, ist König Sigismund der Alte von Polen. Dieser Herrscher, ein geborener Diplomat, scheute sich davor, eindeutige, radikale Meinungen zu äußern und neigte zu friedlichen Problemlösungen, weshalb er auch in seiner Korrespondenz einen diplomatischen Ton anschlug. Seine Ansichten über das Fürstentum und dessen Herrscher lassen sich jedoch aus

39 Ibidem, Nr. 13.

40 Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 3, Nr. 251–253.

41 Ibidem, Nr. 303, 308; ATomic 6, Nr. 275.

42 Über das Bild von Peter Raresz in zeitgenössischen diplomatischen Quellen habe ich ausführlicher in einem Artikel geschrieben: K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșa we współczesnej mu korespondencji dyplomatycznej*, „Balcanica Posnaniensia” 27 (2020), S. 57–68.

seinen Briefen an Petru Rareș sowie aus Briefen an andere Personen ablesen. Um die Wahrnehmung von Petru Rareș durch die Polen und den polnischen König zu erörtern, werde ich ausgewählte Korrespondenzen Sigismunds des Alten heranziehen.

In einem an die Sejmiks⁴³ gerichteten Universalschreiben vom 14. Oktober 1530 warnte Sigismund der Alte den polnischen Adel, dass die Einhaltung der geschlossenen Verträge durch Rareș zweifelhaft sei, berichtete, dass der Hospodar dreiste Provokationen begehe und erst kürzlich in schamloser Weise, wie er sich ausdrückte, die Übergabe des Landes Kolomyia an ihn gefordert habe. Daher sollten in der nächsten Sitzung des Parlaments Vorbereitungen getroffen werden, um einen möglichen Angriff des Hospodars abzuwehren.⁴⁴

Ein hervorragendes Beispiel für die Meinungen über den Hospodar sind die Briefe aus dem Jahr 1531, die zwischen dem polnischen König und Rareș über die strittigste Frage der polnisch-moldauischen Politik – Pokutien – ausgetauscht wurden. Nun, am 3. Februar 1531, antwortete Sigismund der Alte einem Boten von Rareș, der im Sejm von Piotrków eintraf.⁴⁵ Damals brachte der moldauische Gesandte seine Überzeugung zum Ausdruck, dass Pokutien aufgrund der Schenkung der ungarischen Könige zu Moldau gehöre, dass der polnische König es nach dem Tod des Hospodars Bogdan unrechtmäßig an sich gerissen habe, so dass er, Rareș, es als sein Eigentum annehme und es mit der ganzen türkischen Macht und ungarischer, walachischer und tatari-scher Verstärkung verteidigen werde. In seiner Antwort auf diese Botschaft beschuldigte Sigismund der Alte Rareș, den Vertrag gebrochen zu haben, ohne Kriegserklärung in das zu Polen gehörende Pokutien eingedrungen zu sein und es in Besitz genommen zu haben. Als Beweis für die Zugehörigkeit zu Polen verwies Sigismund der Alte auf die Tatsache, dass Stefan der Große Kasimir dem Jagiellonen in Kolomyia, der Hauptstadt von Pokutien, gehuldigt hatte. Bogdan cel Orb și Grozav hat sich dieser Ländereien bemächtigt, erklärte Sigismund weiter, aber man habe es ihm weggenommen. Er müsse sich nur noch umhören. Sigismund der Alte wolle kein Blutvergießen und den Frieden bewahren, wenn nur Rareș ihn auch bewahre. Deshalb verlange er, dass der Hospodar Pokutien verlässt und den Schaden, der den Untertanen des Königreichs zugefügt wurde, wieder gutmacht. Stattdessen baten die Bojaren sie, Rareș davon zu überzeugen, seine Wünsche zu erfüllen, andernfalls müsse er den Hospodar mit göttlicher Hilfe bestrafen.⁴⁶

43 Historische Institutionen der polnischen Selbstverwaltung und des Parlamentarismus.

44 ATomic 12, Nr. 325; Metryka Koronna in Archiwum Głównym Akt Dawnych w Warszawie (weiter: MK) 45, k 480; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 59.

45 Hurmuzaki, Nr. 7; siehe auch TN 46, k. 23; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 59.

46 Ibidem.

In diesem Brief verwendete die königliche Kanzlei jedoch versehentlich die Formulierung „Bohdanus, pater tuus“, und richtete diese Worte an Rareș, was dieser sich natürlich zunutze machte. Als Rareș am 21. Februar desselben Jahres auf den Brief antwortete,⁴⁷ wies er darauf hin, dass so wie die königliche Kanzlei ihn fälschlicherweise als Bogdans Sohn bezeichnete, ist auch die Annahme Polens, Pokutien gehöre zu Polen, falsch. Er erklärte, er habe keine Angst vor königlichen Drohungen, sondern sei selbst von türkischen, ungarischen, siebenbürgischen und tatarischen Interventionen bedroht. Er wehre sich dagegen, der Treulosigkeit bezichtigt zu werden, weil er die Grenzen Polens nicht verletzt, sondern nur das ihm gehörende Land besetzt habe. Außerdem habe er gehört, dass in Polen ein neuer König gekrönt worden sei, mit dem er kein Bündnis geschlossen habe.⁴⁸ In seiner Antwort auf diese Anschuldigungen (in einem Brief vom 31. März 1531) ging Sigismund der Alte bis zum Sarkasmus und erklärte, da der Hospodar die in Latein verfassten königlichen Briefe auf seine Weise interpretiere, sei diesem Brief auch eine ruthenische Kopie beigelegt, um Missverständnisse zu vermeiden. Außerdem erklärte er, dass er sich nie verpflichtet habe, ihm Zugeständnisse für die türkischen Belästigungen zu machen, und dass die Anmaßungen des Hospodars unbegründet seien. Die Krönung des jungen Königs wiederum hätte auf Wunsch der Bürger stattgefunden, damit er sich auf die Macht vorbereiten könne. Solange der alte König lebe, bleibe jedoch alle Macht bei ihm. Auch den Vorschlag, über Pokutien zu schlichten, lehne er ab, da es schon immer zu Polen gehört und dies auch niemand bestritten habe. Bogdan habe versucht, es zu erobern, sei aber hinausgeworfen worden, und dasselbe werde nun mit Rareș geschehen. In diesem Brief finden sich keine weiteren Bitten, Pokutien zu verlassen, da man wusste, dass sie nichts bewirken würden; man rechnete damit, dass der Krieg unvermeidlich war, und man wartete nur auf die Rückkehr des polnischen Gesandten aus Konstantinopel – Jan Ocieski.⁴⁹ In der Zwischenzeit berichtete Jan Ocieski am 19. April 1531 aus Konstantinopel an Krzysztof Szydłowiecki, dass Rareș Sultan Suleiman den Prächtigen und Großwesir Ibrahim Pascha nachdrücklich um Verstärkung gegen Polen gebeten habe, aber abgewiesen worden sei. Im Gegenzug wurde ihm versichert, dass sowohl der Sultan als auch der Großwesir die Freundschaft mit Sigismund dem Alten aufrechterhalten wollen.⁵⁰

47 Hurmuzaki, suppl. 2, Bd. 1 (1510–1600), Nr. 8; siehe auch TN 46, k. 15; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 59.

48 Ibidem.

49 ATomic 13, Nr. 90; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 60.

50 ATomic 13, Nr. 113; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 60.

Die Meinung von Sigismund dem Alten über Rareș war in Polen kein Einzelfall. Jan Statilius, der Bischof von Siebenbürgen, berichtete Piotr Tomicki, dem Unterkanzler der Krone, am 16. April 1532 von der Untreue des Hospodars. Er erklärte, er sei nicht verantwortlich für das, was sein Neffe Peter Rareș getan habe. Er erinnerte daran, dass Rareș ihn bei einem Besuch in Moldau gebeten habe, zumindest einen Waffenstillstand mit Polen zu vermitteln. Aus diesem Grund schickte Statilius seinen Presbyter Franziskus nach Polen, um Friedensverhandlungen zu führen, aber in der Zwischenzeit hatte Rareș seine Aufgabe geändert. Nach Ansicht des Bischofs musste jemand den Hospodar überredet haben, seinen Standpunkt zu ändern und den Waffenstillstand abzulehnen – er deutete an, dass er durch seinen Boten, der sich bei Rareș am Hof aufhielt, herausfinden könnte, wer es war.⁵¹ Auch Piotr Tomicki berichtete dem König aufgrund von Informationen, die er von Hieronim Łaski erhalten hatte, über die von Rareș eingefädelten Intrigen gegen Polen.⁵² Stanisław Lanckoroński wiederum beschuldigte am 16. Oktober 1532 den Hospodar, den Sultan absichtlich gegen Polen aufhetzen zu wollen, indem er ihm falsche Informationen darüber gebe, dass der Große Hetman der Krone zusammen mit mehreren tausend Polen auf der Seite von Ferdinand I. gegen die Türken kämpfe. Außerdem forderte er Moskau auf, gegen Polen zu kämpfen.⁵³ Andererseits beklagte sich der polnische Abgeordnete Piotr Opaliński, der am 13. März 1533 aus dem Osmanischen Reich zurückkehrte, in einem Brief an Sigismund den Alten, dass er Konstantinopel bereits vor acht Wochen verlassen habe und das Land längst hätte erreichen müssen, wenn ihm nicht der moldauische Hospodar aufgelauret hätte. Während er sich auf dem Weg zu den Türken befand, schickte Rareș mehrere hundert Reiter aus seinen siebenbürgischen Burgen aus, mit dem Auftrag, ihn zu töten oder gefangen zu nehmen. In Konstantinopel wurde er jedoch gewarnt, dass er auf dem Rückweg auf noch größere Hindernisse stoßen würde. Diese Warnungen erwiesen sich als wahr, denn als Opaliński in die Walachei kam, zeigte ihm der dortige Hospodar Vlad geheime Briefe von Rareș, in denen dieser verlangte, dass er Opaliński töte oder gefangen nehme.⁵⁴

Sigismund der Alte berichtete in seinen Briefen oder schriftlichen Anweisungen an den Sejm wiederholt, dass er den Worten des Hospodars

51 ATomic 14, Nr. 190 (Manuskript: Czartoryski-Bibliothek in Krakau [weiter: Bczar], rkps 271, S. 121, 122; TN 47, Nr. 93 [vom 15. April]); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 60.

52 ATomic 14, Nr. 418 (Manuskript: BCzar rkps 271, S. 338–340; TN 48, Nr. 41); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 60.

53 ATomic 14, Nr. 467 (Manuskript: TN 48, Nr. 70); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 61.

54 ATomic 15, Nr. 142 (Manuskript: BCzar rkps 271, S. 568–571; TN 49, Nr. 68); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 61.

keinen Glauben schenke. Denn dieser halte sich nicht an Absprachen, stehe nicht zu seinem Wort und sei unzuverlässig. So zum Beispiel beklagte sich Sigismund der Alte am 19. August 1538 in seinem Briefwechsel mit Ferdinand I. über die Schwierigkeit, zwei Heere zu unterhalten, eines zur Verteidigung gegen die Tataren und das andere gegen die Moldau. Auf die Bitte Ferdinands, Polen möge diese nicht angreifen, weil Ferdinand wolle, dass Moldau Ungarn zu Hilfe kommen könne, antwortete Sigismund der Alte, er glaube nicht, dass Rareș, der sich an keine Abmachungen halte, zu einer solchen Hilfe eilen werde. Denn auf ihn sei nicht zu zählen, er halte sein Wort nicht und könne den Christen nicht helfen. Er werde aber der Bitte Ferdinands nachkommen und habe Jan Tarnowski bereits angewiesen, Rareș vorerst nicht anzugreifen, und wenn dieser verspreche, Polen nicht mehr anzugreifen und alle Schäden, die er dem Land zugefügt habe, wieder gut zu machen, werde Tarnowski seine Truppen abziehen und ihm erlauben, Ungarn zu helfen.⁵⁵

Die Meinung Sigismunds des Alten über Rareș ist sehr gut in seinem Brief an Jan Zapolya aus dem Jahr 1539 zusammengefasst (sie fällt somit in die Zeit, nachdem Rareș bereits vom Thron gestürzt worden war, als er bei Zapolya Zuflucht fand), in dem er schreibt, dass Rareș, wenn er freigelassen würde, sicherlich sofort eine Bedrohung für Polen und Ungarn darstellen würde, da er seinen Charakter kenne. Würde er dagegen von Jan Zapolya gegen den Willen der Türken festgehalten (denn der Sultan verlangte die Auslieferung von Rareș), dann könnte der Sultan zu seinem Feind werden, der aus Rache sein Land verwüsten würde, so dass Zapolya das kleinere Übel wählen müsste. Wenn sich aber beide Ausgänge als schlecht herausstellen würden, dann müsste ein dritter gefunden werden, und hier müsste man sich von dem Grundsatz leiten lassen, dass die Sicherheit ihrer Länder wichtiger ist als das Leben eines Menschen.⁵⁶

Sigismund der Alte hatte also definitiv keine gute Meinung von dem Hospodar, er betonte immer wieder dessen Untreue und Unzuverlässigkeit. Er warnte seine Untergebenen vor seiner Doppelzüngigkeit und befahl ihnen, vorsichtig zu sein.

Auch Sultan Suleiman der Prächtige hatte eine ähnliche Meinung von Rareș. Auch er hielt den Hospodar nicht für einen vertrauenswürdigen Mann. Im Gegenteil, sein Ungehorsam, seine ständigen Wort- und

⁵⁵ *Documente privitoare la istoria României culese din arhivele polone. Secolul al XVI-lea*, hg. v. I. Corfus, București 1979, Nr. 6; Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 1, 127; Manuskript: Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien, Ungarica 36, konv. B, k. 114, 115v; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșu...*, S. 62.

⁵⁶ *Documente privitoare la istoria...*, Nr. 22 (31. Dezember; Krakau); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșu...*, S. 62.

Vertragsbrüche und seine wechselnden Verbündeten brachten den Sultan dazu, ihm zu misstrauen. Lassen Sie mich einige Beispiele anführen.

Als der oben erwähnte polnische Gesandte in Konstantinopel, Jan Ocieski, nach Krakau zurückkehrte, berichtete er von seinem Treffen mit dem Sultan: Nun, Jan Ocieski war nach Porta geschickt worden, um sich im Namen Sigismunds des Alten darüber zu beschweren, dass Petru Rareș einige polnische Grenzgebiete besetzt hatte, und als der König Gesandte schickte, um ihn nach dem Grund für den Angriff zu fragen, sagte er, dass er dies auf Befehl des Sultans getan hätte. Daher bat Ocieski den Sultan nun um eine Klärung der Angelegenheit. Der türkische Herrscher erklärte jedoch, Rareș habe dies willkürlich und nicht auf seinen Befehl hin getan. Daraufhin schickte Süleyman der Prächtige dem Hospodar einen Brief, in dem er ihn aufforderte, alle von Polen eroberten Ländereien zurückzugeben und den polnisch-türkischen Frieden nicht mehr zu verletzen. Außerdem hätte Rareș, selbst wenn er sich im Konflikt mit Polen befand, keinen Boten zu Sigismund dem Alten schicken dürfen, da der Sultan ihn zuvor angewiesen hätte, weder selbst Boten zu schicken noch Boten zu empfangen. Sollte jemand Probleme mit dem Hospodar haben, solle er sich an die Türken als moldauischen Vorgesetzten wenden.⁵⁷ Im Januar 1532 versicherte Suleiman der Prächtige dem polnischen König als Antwort auf Ocieskis Botschaft, dass er sich an seine Vereinbarungen mit Polen halte und Rareș keinesfalls in die Länder des Königreichs eindringen lassen werde.⁵⁸

Er wies den polnischen König darauf hin, dass Polen den Woiwoden bis dahin nicht angreifen, sondern nur seine möglichen Angriffe abwehren solle. Was den Nachfolger Rareș' anbelangt, so würde der Sultan sich mit dem polnischen König beraten und einen ihm genehmen Nachfolger ernennen. Diese Worte wurden vom Großwesir Ibrahim Pascha in einem Brief an den polnischen König Sigismund den Alten am 3. März 1534 bestätigt.⁵⁹ Die Ermordung von Ludovicus Gritti, der zu den vertrauenswürdigsten Personen des Sultans gehörte, hat zweifellos die Wahrnehmung von Peter Rareș durch den Sultan noch verstärkt. Im Jahr 1534 wurde er

57 AGAD, AKW (Traktatowe Dokumenty Tureckie), dz.tur., k. 66, Bd. 29, Nr. 66 – Kopie, das Original ist unbekannt; siehe auch: *Matricularum Regni Poloniae summaria, excussis codocibus, qui in Chartophylacio Maximo Varsoviensi asservantur, contextuit indicesque adiecit Theodorus Wierzbowski*, Teil 4, Sigismundi I regis tempora complectens (1507–1548), Bd. 1, Acta cancellariorum 1507–1548 (weiter: MRPS IV/1), Nr. 5914, S. 346 (16–25. Mai 1531; Konstantynopel); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 62.

58 AGAD, AKW, dz.tur., k. 66, Bd. 33, Nr. 75, siehe auch: BCzar rkps 611, S. 109; Regest: ATomic 14, Nr. 52 mit ungenauem Datum, siehe auch: MRPS IV/1, Nr. 6144; ATomic 15, Nr. 595; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 63.

59 ATomic 16/I, Nr. 147 (Manuskript: TN 51, Nr. 144); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 63.

vom Sultan mit dem Auftrag nach Ungarn geschickt, den türkischen Einfluss zu festigen.⁶⁰ Obwohl der wahre Zweck von Grittis Expedition bis heute umstritten ist, steht fest, dass seine Mission weder dem moldauischen Hospodar noch Jan Zapolya selbst gefiel.⁶¹ Daher wurde ein Komplott zur Ermordung Grittis geschmiedet, das im September 1534 in die Tat umgesetzt wurde.⁶² Sowohl der Venezianer als auch dessen Söhne wurden auf Befehl des Hospodars hingerichtet. Dieses Ereignis sorgte für Empörung am türkischen Hof, wo man den moldauischen Herrscher für schuldig hielt. Dies umso mehr, als Jan Zapolya unmittelbar nach diesen Ereignissen einen Brief an den Sultan schickte, in dem er ihm versicherte, dass Rareș und Personen, die mit dem Lager von Ferdinand I. verbunden waren, hinter der ganzen Verschwörung steckten.⁶³ So bot der Sultan dem Hospodar noch eine Zusammenarbeit gegen die Habsburger an, in diesem Fall würde er ihm, wie er versprach, seine Verfehlungen vergeben, doch Rareș lehnte ab.⁶⁴ Da er spürte, dass er den Boden unter den Füßen verlor,⁶⁵ suchte er Hilfe bei Ferdinand I., bot diesem seine Unterstützung im Kampf gegen die Türken an⁶⁶ und erklärte dem Österreicher am 4. April 1535

60 K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 63; A. Decei, *Aloisio Gritti în slujba sultanului Soliman Kanuni, după unele documente turceș ti inedite (1533-1534)*, „Studii și materiale de istorie medie” 7 (1970), S. 101–161; T. Gemil, *În fața impactului otoman*, in: *Petru Rareș*, ed. L. Simanschi, București 1978, S. 147.

61 *Urkunden und Aktenstücke zur Geschichte der Verhältnisse zwischen Österreich, Ungarn und der Pforte im XVI. und XVII. Jahrhundert: Aus Archiven und Bibliotheken: Gesandtschaft König Ferdinands I. an Sultan Suleiman I. 1534*, ed. A. Gévy, Wien 1839, Nr. 37–39; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 63.

62 Francesco della Valle, *Breve narrazione della grandezza, virtu, valore, et della infelice morte dell' Illmo Sigr Conte Alouise Gritti*, hg. v. I. Nagy, „Történelmi Tar” (1857), S. 43–52; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 63; H. Kretschmayr, *Ludovico Gritti. Eine Monographie*, „Archiv für österreichische Geschichte” 83 (1896), 1, S. 81, 82; R. Constantinescu, *Moldova și Transilvania în vremea lui Petru Rareș. Relații politice și militare (1527–1546)*, București 1978, S. 73.

63 K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65; R. Constantinescu, *Moldova și Transilvania...*, S. 74.

64 Im März 1535 berichtete Maciej Lobocki, er habe von seinen Freunden gehört, dass der Sultan beabsichtige, Ibrahim Pascha zu schicken, um Siebenbürgen und Moldau für die Ermordung von Gritti zu bestrafen (ATomic17, Nr. 158). Als Süleiman im Januar 1536 von seinem Feldzug in Asien zurückkehrte, beschloss er zu handeln. Am 4. April 1536 schrieb Bischof Thurzzo an Ferdinand von Habsburg über die Entscheidung der Türken, den Tod von Gritti zu rächen (Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 1, Nr. 76); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

65 Der Sultan ahnte, wer hinter dem Mord an dem Venezianer steckte. Offenbar in Kenntnis dieser Tatsache bat Rareș am 29. Oktober 1534 den polnischen Gesandten Lanckoroński, das Bündnis mit Polen zu erneuern, da er einen türkischen Angriff befürchtete (ATomic 16/2, Nr. 552); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

66 ATomic 17, Nr. 25; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

seine Treue und Loyalität.⁶⁷ Dann bat er ihn, einen Frieden mit Polen zu vermitteln. Ferdinand setzte sich tatsächlich für Rareș ein und schickte einen Boten zu Sigismund dem Alten mit dem Vorschlag, einen polnisch-moldauischen Frieden zu schließen. Der polnische König begegnete ihm mit Zurückhaltung: Am 6. März 1536 teilte er mit, dass er trotz seines aufrichtigen Wunsches keinen Waffenstillstand mit Moldau schließen könne, da der Hospodar in alter Treue einen unerwarteten Angriff auf die polnischen Gebiete arrangiert habe, nachdem der Verhandlungstermin auf den 26. März festgesetzt worden sei.⁶⁸ Diese Haltung des Hospodars (die Loyalitätserklärung gegenüber Ferdinand) war jedoch für den Sultan unannehmbar. Im März 1535 berichtete Maciej Loboeki, er habe von seinen Freunden erfahren, dass der Sultan beabsichtige, den Großwesir Ibrahim Pascha zu schicken, um Siebenbürgen und Moldau für die Ermordung von Gritti zu bestrafen. Als Suleiman der Prächtige im Januar 1536 von seinem Asienfeldzug zurückkehrte, beschloss er zu handeln. Am 4. April 1536 schrieb Bischof Thurzzo an Ferdinand I. über die Entscheidung der Türken, den Tod des Venezianers zu rächen.⁶⁹ Ende Juli 1538 schrieb der Sultan seinerseits an Sigismund den Alten und antwortete auf dessen früheren Brief, den der Gesandte Erasmus Trześciański überbracht hatte. Darin beklagte sich der polnische König über Rareș und schlug vor, dass es im Interesse sowohl Polens als auch der Türken sei, den Hospodar festzusetzen. Der Sultan antwortete, er wolle Sigismunds Forderungen nach der Gefangennahme von Rareș erfüllen und versprach, alles zu tun, um diesen Plan zu verwirklichen.⁷⁰ Denn Rareș sei ein Feind des Osmanischen Reiches, und dieses müsse ihn bestrafen, damit andere potenzielle Rebellen in Zukunft wüssten, dass sie das gleiche Schicksal ereilen würde.⁷¹

Einer derjenigen, die ebenfalls eine schlechte Meinung von Peter Rareș hatten, war Tranquilius Andronik, der Sekretär des bereits erwähnten Ludovicus Gritti: Er hielt ihn für den Anstifter der gesamten Verschwörung

⁶⁷ Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 1, Nr. 66; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

⁶⁸ ATomic 18, Nr. 95 (Manuskript: BJ rkps 6558, fol. 40v-41; BCzar rkps 258, S. 87–89; TN 54, Nr. 47); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

⁶⁹ Hurmuzaki, Bd. 2, Teil 1, Nr. 76 (siehe auch Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv zu Wien, Ungarica 28, konv D [April], k. 9, 10); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

⁷⁰ Hurmuzaki, Suppl. 2, Bd. 1 (1510–1600), Nr. 59 (Manuskript: TN 56, k. 76): Suleimans Brief an Sigismund Ende Juli 1538, in dem er ihn darüber informiert, dass er gegen Rareș aufgebrochen sei, und Sigismund bittet, ihn zu fangen, falls er zu fliehen versuche); K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

⁷¹ AGAD, AKW, dz.tur., k. 66, Bd. 57, Nr. 123; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara moldawskiego Piotra Rareșa...*, S. 65.

gegen den Venezianer und gab ihm die Schuld an dessen Tod. Andronik glaubte, dass Rareș um seine Position in Siebenbürgen fürchtete (Rareș' Ziel war es, in den Besitz von Siebenbürgen zu gelangen, und Grittis Mission stellte eine Bedrohung für dieses Vorhaben dar), und vermutete außerdem, dass Grittis Ziel auch darin bestand, die türkische Position in der Moldau selbst zu stärken.⁷² Aus diesem Grund plante Rareș angeblich ein Attentat auf Gritti. Außerdem inszenierte er dieses Komplott so, dass er Gritti bis zum Schluss zu verstehen gab, dass er auf Grittis Seite stünde und ihm helfen würde. Dann beschuldigte er den Venezianer hinterlistig, Emerik Czibak, den neuen Gouverneur von Siebenbürgen, getötet zu haben, um einen Vorwand zu haben, den Venezianer zu töten (obwohl er Gritti bis zum Schluss in dem Glauben ließ, dass er auf seiner Seite stünde und dass es nicht nötig sei, türkische Verstärkung zu rufen). Er versprach auch, die Söhne des Venezianers freizulassen, gab jedoch heimlich den Befehl, diese zu töten.⁷³

Eine hervorragende Pointe zu seiner Meinung über Moldau und seine Herrscher liefert das Tagebuch von Marino Sanuto, einem venezianischen Historiker und Verfasser eines 58 Bände umfassenden Tagebuchs (1496 bis 1533). Band 56 enthält einen Brief von Herkules Daissola, Sekretär von Hieronim Laski, an Paulo Contarini. Er schickte einen Bericht über seine diplomatischen Reisen, die er im Auftrag von Hieronymus Laski im April 1531 im Dienste von Johannes Zapolya unternommen hatte, und gab eine Beschreibung der Länder, die er besucht hatte. Zu seinem Besuch in der Moldau stellte er zusammenfassend fest, dass das Land schön und reich sei, der Herrscher jedoch zu wünschen übrig lasse (10. März 1532).⁷⁴

Das Bild von Peter Rareș fiel, wie gesehen, in den Augen seiner Zeitgenossen ausgesprochen ungünstig aus. In den Augen der meisten Herrscher galt er als unzuverlässiger Mann, der untreu war und gegebene Versprechen brach. Mit ihm getroffene Absprachen hielt er oft nicht ein. Seine Untreue führte dazu, dass Petru Rareș sowohl bei König Sigismund dem Alten von Polen als auch bei Sultan Suleiman dem Prächtigen und Ferdinand I., also seinen wichtigsten politischen Partnern, nicht nur kein Vertrauen genoss, sondern allmählich auch sein Ansehen als eine Person verlor, mit der man politische Vereinbarungen treffen konnte. Dies musste

⁷² ATomic 16/2, Nr. 644. Zur Beziehung zwischen Gritti und Rareș siehe besonders: K. Niemczyk, *Petru Rareș i Ludovicus Gritti. Historia trudnych relacji między hospodarem mołdawskim, a tureckim szpiegiem na Węgrzech*, in: *Silesia - Polonia - Europa: studia historyczne dedykowane Profesorowi Idziemu Panicowi*, hg. v. J. Sperka, Katowice 2019, S. 331–348.

⁷³ Francesco della Valle..., S. 43–52; H. Kretschmayr, *Ludovico Gritti...*, S. 81, 82; R. Constantinescu, *Moldova și Transilvania...*, S. 211.

⁷⁴ ATomic 14, Nr. 126; siehe auch: M. Sanuto, *I diari de Martino Sanuto 1496–1533*, Bd. 56, Venezia 1901, Sp. 129–138; K. Niemczyk, *Postać hospodara mołdawskiego Piotra Rareșu...*, S. 66–67.

letztlich dazu führen, dass ihm beide Seiten ihre Unterstützung versagten und der Hospodar unterlag.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich sagen, dass das Bild vom Fürstentum Moldau und den moldauischen Hospodaren in den Augen der Zeitgenossen ausgesprochen ungünstig war. In den Augen der meisten Herrscher wurde der Hospodar als unzuverlässig, untreu und als Wortbrecher wahrgenommen. Mit ihnen getroffene Vereinbarungen wurden von ihm oft nicht eingehalten. In der damaligen Lage Moldaus zwischen Mächten wie Polen, Ungarn und dem Osmanischen Reich, die ihren Einfluss in den Gebieten des Hospodars zu festigen suchten, wäre jedoch eine gegenteilige Haltung notwendig gewesen, um die Souveränität wahren zu können und nicht von einem der großen Nachbarn abhängig zu werden. Andererseits fand sie bei den Moldauern, für die das Interesse ihres eigenen Staates natürlich an erster Stelle stand, volles Verständnis und Zustimmung.

ABSTRACT

The Principality of Moldavia in the eyes of its neighbours, Poland, Hungary and the Ottoman Empire, in the late Middle Ages and early modern period

This article deals with the image of the Moldavian hospodarion and its rulers in the eyes of its neighbours. The rulers of Moldova at the turn of the 15th and 16th century, Stefan the Great, Bogdan III the Blind, Stefan the Young and Piotr Raresz, were analysed in turn, and how they were perceived by the neighbours of the hospoderia: the rulers of Poland, Hungary and Turkey. a certain regularity is apparent: the rulers of Moldova are perceived by their neighbours in a decidedly negative way, as disloyal, untrustworthy and manoeuvring between the conflicting parties, taking the position most convenient for them. Also - which is particularly evident during the reign of Bogdan III the Blind - they were viewed with a certain contempt. Nevertheless, from the point of view of the interests of the Moldavian Hospodardom, which at that time was situated between three powers competing for their influence in the hospodardom, such a policy of manoeuvring was necessary to preserve the independence of Moldavia.

Keywords: Stefan the Great, Moldavia, Peter Raresz, Bogdan III the Blind, Ottoman Empire, Jagiellonians

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LITHUANIA THROUGH THE EYES OF DŁUGOSZ



"Cum enim Polonicis rebus plura cohererent externa, non indecorum visum est ea in scribendo non arrogancia (neque enim vires meas ignoro), sed ne ignorentur eciam a nostris, attigisse".¹

This is how Jan Długosz justifies including foreign history in his work on the history of the Kingdom of Poland. And yet it is this breadth of narrative, this fascination with the world and knowledge of neighbouring countries, that ultimately put the Polish chronicler among the most outstanding historiographers of the 15th century. His greatest masterpiece, the mammoth *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, covers events from legendary times to 1480 in twelve books, devoting much space to the description of other nations and countries. Of these, Długosz was particularly interested in Poland's closest neighbours.

By paying heed to the external context of events in Poland, the *Annales* are a valuable source for exploring the history not only of Poland, but also of Lithuania, for which they are in fact fundamental. They also bear witness to the chronicler's interest in and attitude towards Lithuanian affairs. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that the information provided by the Canon of Cracow is set in a strictly defined historical context, and the image of foreigners in his work, in this case Lithuania and Lithuanians, is influenced by his worldview and the determinants that shaped it. Moreover, the union of 1386, which marked the beginning of the political

¹ Ioannis Dlugossii *Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae* (henceforth: *Annales*), lib. 1-2, ed. J. Dąbrowski, Warszawa 1964, p. 62.

coexistence of Poles and Lithuanians under the Jagiellonian monarchy, made it Jan Długosz's duty as a historian to devote more attention to the history of the Lithuanian nation.

The *Annales* were the first written source to present in detail the customs, origins, and history of the Lithuanians, a people living east of the Pisa and Bug Rivers. The chronicler's account of Lithuania would certainly have aroused the interest of scholars for this reason alone, but it is also a fundamental source of knowledge about the views and opinions circulating in late medieval Poland about the union and mutual Polish-Lithuanian relations. In 1985, Marcelli Kosman, an expert on the history of Lithuania, postulated that Długosz's attitude towards Lithuania should be examined in more detail,² a view with which Jakub Skomiał agreed almost twenty years later, announcing a publication on Długosz's assessment of Polish-Lithuanian relations.³ Skomiał, in his attempt to present as comprehensively as possible the image of the Lithuanians created by the chronicler, focuses on three specific issues: the origins of the Lithuanians, their traits as a nation, and the characteristics of their rulers. A paper by Sister Aleksandra Witkowska touches on the aspect of pagan customs and beliefs⁴ as elements of the collective image. The analysis of Długosz's chronicle with regard to the image of foreigners, including Lithuanians, is supported by a number of works that deal partially and indirectly with the factors determining his narrative. First of all, there are studies by Maria Koczarska, Sławomir Gawlas and Jadwiga Krzyżaniakowa, which focus, among other things, on Jan Długosz's national consciousness and the concept of the nation as it functioned in his time.⁵ To these aspects of the description and characterisation of Lithuania I would add that of geography.

The question of how much Długosz knew about the geography of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is relatively clear. His *Chorografia Regni Poloniae*, a descriptive geography of Poland and the Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands, is considered a unique example of Polish medieval writing, and the author deserves his reputation as an outstanding geographer of his time.

² M. Kosman, *Polacy o Litwinach (do połowy XVI wieku)*, in: *Spółeczeństwo Polski Średniowiecznej*, vol. 3, Warszawa 1985, p. 419.

³ J. Skomiał, *Jan Długosz o Litwie i Litwinach*, in: *Wielokulturowość polskiego pogranicza. Ludzie – idee – prawo*, ed. A. Lityński, P. Fiedorczyk, Białystok 2003, p. 195.

⁴ A. Witkowska, *Wyobrażenia o cudzoziemcach w świetle „Roczników” Jana Długosza*, http://www.jandlugosz.edu.pl/files/artykuly/Aleksandra_Witkowska_Wyobrazenia_o_cudzoziemcach_w_swietle_Rocznikow_Jana_Dlugosza_Rozdzial_3_Kreacja_wizerunku_wschodnich_sasiadow_w_Annales.pdf [accessed: 15. XI. 2024].

⁵ M. Koczarska, *Mentalność Długosza w świetle jego twórczości*, “*Studia Źródłoznawcze*” 15 (1970), pp. 109-139; S. Gawlas, *Świadomość narodowa Jana Długosza*, “*Studia Źródłoznawcze*” 27 (1983), pp. 3-66 (with further references).

It was a discrete work, produced with a completely separate research apparatus, and Długosz included it in the first book of his *Annales*. In assessing Jan Długosz's knowledge of the lands of the Grand Duchy, scholars, beginning with Jan Kornaś and Franciszek Bujak, had for a long time been unanimous in pointing out the stark contrast between the Canon of Cracow's excellent command of the geography of Poland and what he knew of the lands east of the Bug and Pisa Rivers,⁶ "where the number of geographical references in Długosz is very small and the accuracy of information on individual geographical features is very low" (a quote from Wacława Szelińska,⁷ an expert on Długosz's *Chorography*). This view was only challenged by Stanisław Alexandrowicz, an eminent researcher of the Grand Duchy's cartography. Alexandrowicz analysed Długosz's account through the lens of the methodology of geographical description (which, incidentally, he greatly appreciated) and the available means of verifying information about the sparsely populated, vast and inaccessible areas. He came to the conclusion that "a general, or even partial, denial of the value of the part of the *Chorography* relating to Lithuania would be deeply unfounded and unfair".⁸ However, the *Chorography* is not the only part of Długosz's oeuvre to consider the geographical space of Lithuania, as he also provides such information elsewhere, when reporting on events. Among the many more or less accurate topographical references, there are some that stand out for their precision, such as his description of the "great lake or marsh" from which the Daugava, Volga and Dnieper Rivers flow. Here, the chronicler reports accurately, even though it concerns an area already beyond the north-eastern border of the Grand Duchy (in the direction of Novgorod the Great). Stanisław Alexandrowicz has shown that Długosz drew his information about the common sources of these three rivers from the *Primary Chronicle*, but the fact that he gives the exact distance of the lake from Smolensk suggests that he must have had an additional source.⁹ Długosz had probably never been to Lithuania: there is no evidence that he was familiar with the land. He relied mainly on informants, Lithuanians and Ruthenians, of whom there was no shortage in Cracow and at the royal court, and Polish clergy and laymen active in the Grand Duchy.¹⁰ Although

6 J. Kornaś, *Jan Długosz, geograf polski XV wieku*, "Prace Geograficzne" 5 (1925), pp. 81-126; F. Bujak, *Długosz jako geograf*, in: idem, *Studia geograficzno-historyczne*, Warszawa 1925, pp. 91-105.

7 W. Szelińska, *Jan Długosz i opis Małopolski w jego 'Chorografia Regni Poloniae'*, in: *Długosiana. Studia historyczne w pięćsetlecie śmierci Jana Długosza*, ed. S. Gawęda, Warszawa 1980, p. 253.

8 S. Alexandrowicz, *Ziemie Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w 'Chorografii' Jana Długosza*, in: *Studia z dziejów geografii i kartografii*, ed. J. Babicz, Wrocław-Warszawa 1973, p. 295.

9 Ibidem, p. 315.

10 See: L. Korczak, *Jan Długosz a Litwa – miejsce i ludzie*, in: *Jan Długosz (1415-1480). Życie i dzieła*, ed. L. Korczak, M.D. Kowalski, P. Węcowski, Kraków 2016, pp. 185-186.

fragmentary and lacking in detail, Długosz's descriptions give an idea of the vastness and inaccessibility of the Lithuanian state. The very fact that he included Lithuanian lands in the *Chorography* means, as Adam Krawiec put it, that "in Długosz's mental geography, Lithuania did not constitute a separate entity from the Kingdom of Poland".¹¹ He therefore described it, like the other lands of the kingdom, to the best of his knowledge.

As participants in events, Lithuanians appear relatively late in the pages of the *Annales*.¹² In the opinion of Jakub Skomiał, shared by Aleksandra Witkowska, the chronicler is deliberate in not mentioning them earlier than in connection with the events of the early 13th century, and this late introduction of Lithuanians into the narrative was intended to alienate them from the main current of history.¹³ However, it should be remembered that Długosz considered foreigners in his chronicle when their history was in some way connected with the history of Poland, and in the case of Lithuania he found no opportunity for such a digression before the beginning of the thirteenth century. Moreover, the Polish sources used by Długosz lack information about Lithuania before the 13th century. The first detailed mention of Lithuanians in the *Annales* is in Book VI, under the year 1205, in a brief account of their attack on Ruthenia. Długosz emphasises strongly that "it was then that the name of the Lithuanian tribe, hitherto in hiding, was heard for the first time. Having been subordinated to the Ruthenians for many years, they gave them simple gifts and tree bark as tribute".¹⁴ According to Długosz, Lithuania was a barren land of impoverished people. This explains the meagre tribute paid to the Ruthenian dukes, who collected it only to emphasise their sovereignty over the Lithuanians. This characterisation is repeated several more times in 1387, when Długosz gives a much fuller account of the land and people with whom the Kingdom of Poland formed a union.

According to Jan Długosz, the poor and primitive Lithuanian people were not on a par with the Christian Poles, as they "fed" on the plunder of their neighbours:

many lands of the kingdom were completely deserted by the stealthy and treacherous Lithuanian raids and the capture of settlers and inhabitants, and the Lithuanians, after taking their spoils, do not put

¹¹ A. Krawiec, *Ciekawość świata w średniowiecznej Polsce. Studium z dziejów geografii kraczynej*, Poznań 2010, p. 294.

¹² In Book Two, in a passage devoted to the Prussian mission of Saint Adalbert, Długosz states that the Prussians, Lithuanians and Samogitians share the same customs, language and origins, only to contradict himself immediately afterwards.

¹³ A. Witkowska, *Wyobrażenia...*, p. 43.

¹⁴ *Jana Długosza Roczniki czyli kroniki sławnego Królestwa Polskiego*, lib. 5-6, transl. J. Mrukówna, Warszawa 2009, p. 264.

up a fight, but return like wolves and wild animals to their lands surrounded by dense forests, rivers and lakes, and swamps full of stagnant water.¹⁵

This sense of superiority is evident in the chronicler's explanation of King Władysław Łokietek's decision to ally with the Lithuanian ruler Gediminas in 1325: "When [...] no effective way could be found to repel the savage onslaught of the Lithuanians, it was decided to enter into ties of friendship and kinship with them, if the savages could be persuaded to gentleness and humane coexistence at all."¹⁶ In Jan Długosz's account, however, political motivations outweigh aversion to the barbarian nation, as Łokietek's pact with Gediminas, bolstered by the marriage of their children Prince Casimir and Princess Anna, allowed a large number of captive Poles to return to their homeland, where "with their safety assured, they began to cultivate the land which had long been neglected as barren. And admirably, in a short time they not only repopulated the old villages, but also founded new ones *in cruda radice*."¹⁷ The chronicler's references to this alliance between Poles and pagans sing a hymn to peace and friendship: "They made the country rich and prosperous because both Poles and Lithuanians abandoned the raids with which they used to bedevil each other to live together in great harmony and friendship."¹⁸

In his portrayal of Poland's eastern neighbours, Długosz shows the same bias evident in earlier Polish chronicles, where, in addition to a general tendency to belittle the role of others, a dislike of both Ruthenians and Lithuanians is obvious. Contempt for Lithuanians is particularly pronounced in consideration of the pre-union (and at the same time pagan) period, although this does not mean that after the union Długosz ceases to remind the Lithuanians of the superiority of the Poles, thanks to whom they were baptised. He just does it less often and more subtly, painting a collective portrait of the Lithuanians through the characterisation of selected figures. The choice of the Grand Duke of Lithuania, Jogaila, as the husband of Queen Jadwiga and King of Poland, and the Christianisation campaign launched in Lithuania by the newly baptised ruler (assisted by a host of Polish lords and knights), provided Długosz with an opportunity to present a broader characterisation of the nation and its customs, and thus the cultural 'baggage' with which it entered into union with the Poles. It is significant that the very decision of the Poles to offer the crown to a foreign pagan duke,

15 Ibidem, lib. 9, p. 162.

16 Ibidem.

17 Ibidem, p. 163.

18 Ibidem.

after despising their own Polish hereditary princes, is seen by the chronicler as a punishment for transgressions,¹⁹ as if the Poles had brought misfortune upon themselves by uniting with the Lithuanians. In this context, the efforts of the Canon of Cracow to provide a “thorough” explanation of the origin of the Lithuanians become all the more interesting. He begins by stating that not much is known about the subject, since no author has left any account on when and from where the Lithuanians and Samogitians arrived in the north,²⁰ only to later trace the origin of the Lithuanians back to the ancient Romans. In his *Annales*, Długosz was the first to give an account of the genesis of the Lithuanian nation. His concept proved to be highly fruitful, as evidenced by the role it played in culture, becoming the basis of the myth of Lithuania’s Roman origins in its various incarnations.²¹

The *Annales* deal with the origin of the Lithuanians in two books: II and X. The order of the books, however, does not imply a chronological order of their creation. Długosz began writing his opus magnum in 1455 and continued to make additions and corrections until the end of his life (1480). His continuous work on the text can be seen in the manuscript known as the so-called Auto-graph. In Book II, when recounting the martyrdom of Saint Adalbert, Długosz writes about the pagan customs of the Prussians, “a harsh and cruel people”, who had nearly “the same gods, rites and ceremonies” as the Lithuanians, and “shared a common language and origin.”²² A little later, however, Długosz contradicts his own words, stating that “although they are similar, they are not considered to be of the same stock and language”,²³ and derives the origin of the Prussians from the Bithynian King Prusias. In Book X, there is no further mention of any affinity between the Lithuanians and the Prussians: “The Lithuanians, Samogitians and Yotvingians, although they were called by different names and divided into many clans, were one people, descending from the Romans and the Italians. Unknown for a long time, it was only at this time that these people came to public attention. They were Italian and Roman

19 *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 155: “Que quidem ornamenta [...], quod propriis et naturalibus Poloniae principibus a catholicis parentibus genus ducentibus Divina permissione propter eorum excessus et demerita reprobatis et neglectis, in barbarum et alienum principem collata”.

20 *Ibidem*, p. 164: “Parum constet, cum id nemo scriptorum reliquerit, qualiter, quomodo et quando gens Lithwanica et Samagittica in has, quas modo incolit, septemtrionales regiones venerit, aut a qua gente stirpem et genus ducat”.

21 For a comprehensive overview of this issue in Polish historiography, together with a discussion of the earlier literature, see J. Jurkiewicz, *Od Palemona do Giedymina. Wczesnonowoczesne wyobrażenia o początkach Litwy*, Poznań 2012; J. Orzeł, *From imagination to political reality? The Grand Duchy of Lithuania as a successor of Rome in the early modern historiography (15th-18th centuries)*, [Open Political Science] 2018, pp. 170-181.

22 *Annales*, lib. 1-2, pp. 216-217.

23 *Ibidem*, p. 217.

exiles from the time of the fierce wars between Julius Caesar and Pompey.”²⁴ It is impossible to say with certainty whether the chronicler changed his mind in the course of writing because he had received a different opinion, or whether he himself had reworked the ethnogenetic legend and found premises in favour of the Roman origin of the Lithuanians.

The authorship of this legend is disputed. Most scholars agree that Długosz was not the original source, suggesting that it may have been the Lithuanians themselves. In support of this view, they argue that in the first half of the 15th century the Lithuanians were developing a national consciousness and a sense of political autonomy, and were eager to prove to the Poles that they had a worthy past and no less famous ancestors.²⁵ According to Jakub Skomiał, who cites various opinions on the legend in question, Długosz’s account is merely a reflection of a much older legend that can be traced back to the first half of the 14th century.²⁶ A more convincing view, however, is that the Polish chronicler gave a literary form to an ethnogenetic legend already quite popular among the Lithuanian elite at the time, a legend borne out of the rifts within the union between Lithuania and the Crown in the mid-15th century.²⁷ Although Długosz provides an extensive and detailed account of the Italic origin of the people who came to the north, he is careful to point out that this is speculation. At the same time, he tries to make it plausible. Długosz makes several arguments to confirm the validity of his claim about the Roman origins of the Lithuanians. First, Italian roots are evident in the name ‘Lithuania’ itself: “regioni ex patrio et vetusto nomine Lithalia, genti vero Lithali, que hodie Lithwania ex Polonorum et Ruthenorum immutacione appellatur, unam tantummodo litteram L, quam etiam nunc Italici homines sue adiiciunt vulgari locucioni, preponendo, incidisse”.²⁸ He also argues that the Lithuanians spoke Latin, which took on Slavic words under the influence of neighbouring peoples.²⁹ Secondly, he points out the rites and beliefs shared between the Lithuanians and Romans, including the custom of burning human corpses along with precious objects and animals. Here Długosz shows himself to be thoroughly familiar with the pantheon, customs and beliefs of the ancient Romans. Finally, and somewhat less successfully,

²⁴ *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 10, p. 218.

²⁵ See: E. Kulicka, *Legenda o rzymskim pochodzeniu Litwinów i jej stosunek do mitu sarmackiego*, „Przegląd Historyczny” 71 (1980), pp. 5-8.

²⁶ J. Skomiał, *Jan...*, p. 199.

²⁷ E. Kulicka, *Legenda...*, p. 5-6.

²⁸ *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 165.

²⁹ *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 10, p. 220. The eminent Italian humanist Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, a contemporary of Długosz, is not only silent on the Italian origin of the Lithuanians, but claims that they spoke a Slavic language (A. Janulaitis, *Enejas Sylvius Piccolomini bei Jeronimas Pragiškis ir jų žinios apie Lietuvą XIV-XV a.*, Kaunas 1928, pp. 49-50).

under whose leadership they left Italy and came to this area.³⁰

According to Długosz, the newcomers also named the rivers that flow through Vilnius – the Vilia (Neris) and the Vilnia – after the duke. In fact, it is likely that the names of the city and the rivers inspired Długosz to invent the character of Duke Willius, the leader of the exiles, while the name itself, as Kiestutis Gudmantas suggests, may have been taken from Livy's *History of Rome*.³¹

The Polish chronicler may have honoured the Lithuanians living in the inaccessible and harsh northern land with an illustrious Roman ancestry, but at the same time he paints a picture of their customs, culture and national character that is far from flattering. The early history of Lithuania is presented in a similar vein, a “despised, obscure and destitute” country.³² He is surprised that the Lithuanians, “inter septemtrionales populos obscurissimi, Ruthenorum servitutis et tributis vilibus obnoxii”,³³ managed not only to free themselves from Ruthenian rule, but also to subjugate them. According to Długosz, the first Lithuanian victory over the Ruthenian princes came only in the time of Duke Vitenes. His emphasis on the he looks for analogies in political institutions. Most notably in the titlature, where he derives the etymology of the title of Grand Duke of Lithuania from the nickname of Pompey the Great.³⁴ It seems that Długosz was persuaded to recognise the Roman origin of the Lithuanians mainly by similarities in rituals and beliefs, which he interpreted in the spirit of the typical *interpretatio Romana*. In any case, it is in this area that he gives the most examples, such as:

eadem quoque sacra, eosdem deos, eosdem sacrorum ritus, easdem ceremonias, que et qui Romanis gentilibus erent, ante susceptam fidem coluisse, videlicet sacrum ignem et qui falsa credulitate ab illis perpetuus habitus est, et in illo Iovem tonantem per virgines vestales Rome custoditum, [...] item silvas, quas vocabant sacrosanctas, [...] in silvisque huiusmodi deum Silvanum ceterosque deos, [...] in aspidibus vero atque serpentibus deum Esculapium [...] Talibusque et similibus sacris, etsi

³⁰ *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 10, pp. 218-219.

³¹ K. Gudmantas, *Lietuvių kilmės iš Romėnų teorijos genezė ir ankstyvosios Lietuvos vardo etimologijos*, „Senoji Lietuvos literatūra“ 17 (2004), pp. 250-251. Livy mentions a Roman politician named Publius Villius Tapulus.

³² *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 10, p. 217; *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 166: “Litwanica regio in annis superioribus [...] contempta, obscura et vilis”.

³³ *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 169.

³⁴ *Ibidem*: “[...] princeps Litwanie principalis, quem ille gentes more maiorum magnum vocare solent (qua etiam appellatione Pompeius vocitebatur)”.

non ad liquidum Romanos et Italos exprimebant, pro magna parte tamen imitebantur.³⁵

In an attempt to support his version of Lithuanian genealogy, Długosz fully accounts for the flight of the Lithuanians from Rome. He describes them as “exiled Italics and Romans” who, led by Duke Willius, fled Rome and founded their city, Vilnius: „when Pompey first suffered defeat at Pharsalos and then died at Alexandria in Egypt, because some of them were very close to Pompey and supported him more fervently than other Romans, out of hatred for the victorious Julius Caesar. Fearing that he would take too cruel a revenge on them as his most bitter and suspicious enemies, they left Rome with all their property and servants in the year 714 from the foundation of the city, and went to the northern countries, where they could hide away safely and with impunity [...] They secretly occupied the uninhabited wilderness between Poland, Russia, Livonia and Prussia, where the bitter cold prevailed, freezing over like winter for most of the year. [...] There they first founded the city of Vilnius, which to this day is the capital of the state, and named it after Duke Willius.”³⁶

According to Długosz, the newcomers also named the rivers that flow through Vilnius - the Vilia (Neris) and the Vilnia - after the duke. In fact, it is likely that the names of the city and the rivers inspired Długosz to invent the character of Duke Willius, the leader of the exiles, while the name itself, as Kiestutis Gudmantas suggests, may have been taken from Livy's *History of Rome*.³⁷

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Dignified Roman origin of the Lithuanians is puzzling in view of his dislike and prejudice against them, as evidenced in his extensive

³⁵ Ibidem, p. 165.

³⁶ *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 10, pp. 218-219.

³⁷ K. Gudmantas, *Lietuvių kilmės iš Romėnų teorijos genezė ir ankstyvosios Lietuvos vardo etimologijos*, „Senoji Lietuvos literatūra” 17 (2004), pp. 250-251. Livy mentions a Roman politician named Publius Villius Tapulus.

³⁸ *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 10, p. 217; *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 166: “Litwanica regio in annis superioribus [...] contempta, obscura et vilis”.

³⁹ *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 169.

characterisations. Why such a disharmony in perception? What was the purpose of such an ambivalent juxtaposition, and why did the chronicler make it? Jan Długosz was not afraid to express criticism and harsh judgements, even about matters and people close to him,⁴⁰ and he may sometimes have been inconsistent in his opinions, striving for objectivity in the construction of the narrative. However, the description of the honourable ancestry of the Lithuanians was not his own opinion; it belonged to the sphere of information. In my opinion, Długosz simply wrote what he, as a historian, could not omit, as it was already well-established knowledge circulating in his milieu. He gave a coherent form to the story of the Roman origin of the Lithuanians, which he supported with arguments based on the similarities he noticed.⁴¹

While giving an overview of past events and reporting on current ones, the chronicler also takes the opportunity to characterise the Lithuanians as a nation. The adjectives he uses to describe the Lithuanians are not difficult to find. Right at the beginning of his account, in Book X, Długosz describes Lithuanians as the most primitive of the northern nations. He attributes their cultural degeneration in part to poor living conditions, climate and coexistence with the Ruthenians, as

gelidissimum septemtrionis axem [...] spectant, adeoque imbre et frigore rigescunt, ut plerosque vis algoris extinguat, multos nasis, quod illic maior videtur inesse humor, in quem agat, mutilet. Duobus tantummodo mensibus [...] sentitur magis quam habetur estas; reliqua anni tempora frigore rigent. Coguntur proinde male matura frumenta igne torrere et artificioso calore illis maturitatem conferre. [...] Qui a peregrinis voluptatibus excepti contagione et alimento degenerant, populationibus incursionibusque, quam dimicacione, meliores.⁴²

The chronicler stresses the social injustice of slavery, still widespread among Lithuanians, as based on one's birth or inability to pay court fines and debts ("[...] ministeriisque et sudore servorum et suppellectilem congerunt et opes, archana sua et principum, veteri disciplina edocti, mira celant fide"⁴³).

⁴⁰ This was certainly true of Polish affairs, yet he did not refrain from criticising the Poles either, see: S. Gawęda, *Ocena niektórych problemów historii ojczystej w Rocznikach 'Jana Długosza, in: Długossiana. Studia historyczne w pięćsetlecie śmierci Jana Długosza*, ed. S. Gawęda, Warszawa 1980, pp. 196-201.

⁴¹ Callimachus, a Polish-Italian humanist somewhat younger than Długosz, was not convinced by the arguments for the Roman origin of the Lithuanians. He was closer to the idea of a Gallic origin, see J. Jurkiewicz, *Od Palemona...*, pp. 42-45.

⁴² *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 166.

⁴³ *Ibidem*, p. 167.

It was the slaves who made up the bulk of the army, building houses and doing the housework. Długosz also criticises the Lithuanian dukes for failing to protect their abused and oppressed subjects. While the common people suffered hardship - "they eat little and meagre food made of flour"⁴⁴ - the lords "accumulated considerable wealth through the labour and sweat of slaves".⁴⁵ For the highly critical historian, whose opinions on the Lithuanians were sometimes downright hostile, they were barbarians and so were their customs.⁴⁶ Długosz levels similar criticism of equally false superstitions, barbaric traditions, hardship and miserable existence at the Samogitians in describing the Christianisation of Samogitia by King Jogaila in 1413.⁴⁷

He also accused Lithuanians of being fickle and prone to treachery, rebellion and deceit as a nation. As people, he considers them impulsive, deceitful and stingy, prone to debauchery, drunkenness and flattery.⁴⁸ Such a negative attitude probably stemmed from the Christian chronicler's dislike of people who were late to be baptised and had remained pagans for so long. His portrait of the descendants of Willius takes into account their attitude towards warfare and their way of life. In particular, he rebukes the Lithuanians as spineless, repeatedly recounting in the *Annales* how they avoided fighting or fled the battlefield. He draws a stark contrast between the cowardice of the Lithuanians and the chivalrous bravery of the Poles in 1399, recounting the Battle of the Vorskla River and what he sees as typical Lithuanian behaviour. He goes on to compare the actions of Duke Vytautas and Voivode Spytko of Melsztyn:

[...] the Grand Duke of Lithuania Alexander-Vytautas urged the Voivode of Cracow Spytko to flee with him to avoid the imminent danger, arguing that it would not bring him ignominy but glory if he were to rescue the commander-in-chief. Spytko, who considered fleeing a disgrace, stayed and, as a knight, a man and a Christian should, fearlessly rushed among his enemies, killed many of them and finally, pierced by a multitude of arrows and pagan projectiles, exhaled his heroic spirit. It seems to me that Voivode Spytko deserved more glory in his death than Duke Vytautas deserved in his life [...].⁴⁹

Długosz emphasises the sloth of the Lithuanians and their inclination to transgression and plunder. In describing the Lithuanians, he uses pejorative

44 *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 10, p. 220.

45 *Ibidem*, p. 218.

46 *Annales*, lb. X, p. 168: "[...] austeritatem et parsimoniam plus quam barbaricam exercent".

47 *Jana Długosza Roczniki*, lib. 11, pp. 20-21.

48 *Ibidem*, lib. 10, pp. 220-221.

49 *Ibidem*, p. 298.

language characteristic of the attitudes towards paganism at that time, although he does also manage to note their few virtues, including modesty and love of country. There is little evidence that the Lithuanians grew in Długosz's eyes after the union with Poland and the adoption of Christianity. This negative assessment is summed up in a fragment that already refers to Christian times in Lithuania during the reign of Grand Duke Vytautas Kęstutaitis:

Hos [Lithuanos - LK] Withawdus Alexander duabus rebus obedienter parentes habuit, sine quibus irritus est et precarius, umbrequē similis aput illos omnis principatus; timore quidem, quod esset ad penam pronus, atrox et immitis; diligencia quoque, quod in expedicionibus et in expediendis singulorum necessitatibus erat celer, munificus et magnanimus.⁵⁰

There are descriptions of individuals among the collective portrait of the Lithuanians, but these are relatively few. Długosz took a natural interest in the dukes of the House of Gediminas, with a particular focus on those relatives of Jogaila who held power in Lithuania. Among them, he portrays Vytautas most extensively, not only in terms of his political activities, but also as a person. Długosz's interest in Vytautas needs no explanation; it is evident from the role he played in the Polish-Lithuanian monarchy during the reign of Jogaila. As described by Długosz, Vytautas appears not only as the architect of Lithuania's glory and the greatest ruler of his time but is also given the title of *pater patriae*.⁵¹ The significance of this becomes clear when we consider how sparingly Długosz uses this very meaningful epithet. In his eyes Vytautas comes close to the ideal ruler, though not necessarily as a man. In his description of the successive Grand Dukes, Švitrigaila and Sigismund Kęstutaitis, however, we hear echoes of Długosz's characterisation of the pagan Lithuanians: impetuous, deceitful and avaricious, prone to debauchery and drunkenness, and practising fortune-telling and prophecy with extraordinary zeal. Długosz does not pay the same kind of attention to those outside the dynasty. However, his accounts of more and less prominent people in public life are often the only source of information about their activities. Of course, his knowledge was determined by the available opportunities and ways of obtaining information.⁵²

Długosz's opinion of the Lithuanians was influenced by religion. The chronicler openly mocks them, often emphasising their paganism and low level of culture. Interestingly, Długosz, who declared himself an ardent

50 *Annales*, lib. 10, p. 169.

51 See: J. Skomiał, *Polski portret litewskiego władcy. Witold Kiejstutowicz w świetle 'Annales' Jana Długosza*, in: *'Rodzinna Europa'. Europejska myśl polityczno-prawna u progu XXI wieku*, Wrocław 2015, pp. 41-61.

52 See: L. Korczak, *Jan...*, pp. 183-197.

Christian, believed in prophecies read from the stars, miracles and sorcery, while at the same time rebuking the Lithuanians for their inclination to divination. His portrayal of the Lithuanians softened when they were baptised by Polish hands and became full members of the Christian community in the Polish-Lithuanian monarchy. Later, the chronicler even defends the Lithuanians, questioning the legitimacy of the Teutonic Order's raids on their lands and challenging the notion that, despite their conversion to Christianity, they still adhered to paganism. According to Jakub Skomiał, the main factor determining Długosz's attitude towards the Lithuanians was the criterion of compliance with the interests of the Polish state and nation.⁵³

Długosz's views on Lithuania were probably influenced to some extent by old stereotypes. He is also known to have been critical of other foreign nations, which in the case of the Lithuanians was deepened by prejudice. However, this attitude was not unambiguous, as the chronicler's ambivalent opinion of Jogaila shows. Along with many bitter remarks about the king, there is also praise, especially for his role in the Christianisation of Lithuania. In a general characterisation of the king, Długosz calls him a man with a simple but magnificent heart (*Cordis simplicis erat, sed magnifici*).

ABSTRACT

The mammoth *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, covers events from legendary times to 1480 in twelve books and they are a valuable source for exploring the history not only of Poland, but also of Lithuania, for which they are in fact fundamental. The *Annales* were the first written source to present in detail the customs, origins and history of the Lithuanians, a people living east of the Pisa and Bug Rivers. The question of how much Długosz knew about the geography of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania is relatively clear. His *Chorografia Regni Poloniae*, a descriptive geography of Poland and the Lithuanian-Ruthenian lands, is considered a unique example of Polish medieval writing. Although fragmentary and lacking in detail, Długosz's descriptions give an idea of the vastness and inaccessibility of the Lithuanian state. The very fact that he included Lithuanian lands in the *Chorography* means, as Adam Krawiec put it, that "in Długosz's mental geography, Lithuania did not constitute a separate entity from the Kingdom of Poland". He therefore described it, like the other lands of the kingdom, to the best of his knowledge.

The first detailed mention of Lithuanians in the *Annales* is in Book VI, under the year 1205, in a brief account of their attack on Ruthenia. According to Długosz, Lithuania was a barren land of impoverished people. This characterisation is repeated several more times in 1387, when Długosz gives a much fuller account of the land and people with whom the Kingdom of Poland formed a union. According to Jan Długosz, the poor and primitive Lithuanian people were not on a par with the Christian Poles, as they "fed" on the plunder

53 J. Skomiał, *Jan...*, p. 210.

of their neighbours. Contempt for Lithuanians is particularly pronounced in consideration of the pre-union (and at the same time pagan) period, although this does not mean that after the union Długosz ceases to remind the Lithuanians of the superiority of the Poles, thanks to whom they were baptised. He just does it less often and more subtly, painting a collective portrait of the Lithuanians through the characterisation of selected figures.

In his *Annales*, Długosz was the first to give an account of the genesis of the Lithuanian nation. His concept proved to be highly fruitful, as evidenced by the role it played in culture, becoming the basis of the myth of Lithuania's Roman origins in its various incarnations. The Polish chronicler gave a literary form to an ethnogenetic legend already quite popular among the Lithuanian elite at the time, a legend borne out of the rifts within the union between Lithuania and the Crown in the mid-15th century. Although Długosz provides an extensive and detailed account of the Italic origin of the people who came to the north, he is careful to point out that this is speculation. The Polish chronicler may have honoured the Lithuanians living in the inaccessible and harsh northern land with an illustrious Roman ancestry, but at the same time he paints a picture of their customs, culture and national character that is far from flattering. The early history of Lithuania is presented in a similar vein, a "despised, obscure and destitute" country. Długosz emphasises the sloth of the Lithuanians and their inclination to transgression and plunder. In describing the Lithuanians, he uses pejorative language characteristic of the attitudes towards paganism at that time, although he does also manage to note their few virtues, including modesty and love of country. There is little evidence that the Lithuanians grew in Długosz's eyes after the union with Poland and the adoption of Christianity. Długosz's views on Lithuania were probably influenced to some extent by old stereotypes. He is also known to have been critical of other foreign nations, which in the case of the Lithuanians was deepened by prejudice. However, this attitude was not unambiguous.

Keywords: Jan Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae*, Lithuania, ethnogenetic legend, collective portrait

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II. CURRENT RESEARCH

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VANQUISHED CONQUERORS. SLAVS IN MEDIEVAL GREECE (PART II)



The year 602 marks the end of the active strategic policy of the Romans on the Danube and, interestingly, also brings the last mention of the Antes, who have since disappeared from the sources.¹ The Avar Khagan sent an army under the command of "Apsih, to destroy the people of the Antes, an ally of the Romans".² When this happened, a great number of people left the Avars, hurrying to surrender to the emperor.³ Khagan tried to stop the "traitors."⁴

¹ If Heraclius included in his *cognomina devictarum gentium* in 612 the *cognomen* "Anticus" - cf. Teofilakt Simokatta, *Historia powszechna*, transl., introd. and comment A. Kotłowska, Ł. Różycki, Poznań 2016 (further: Kotłowska-Różycki, Teofilakt), p. 369, n. 898, this does not in any way indicate the political "plans" in Constantinople towards the Antes, since the title itself was a dead legacy, as can be repeatedly proved in the case of other *cognomina devictarum gentium* of Roman emperors in the Late Antiquity.

² Theoph. Sim., VIII 5, 13.

³ The "destruction of the Antes" was doubted as early as 1837 by P. Szafarzyk, *Starożytności słowiańskie*, transl. Hieronim Napoleon Bońkowski, vol. 1, Poznań 1844, p. 402. Politically, they were probably shattered, but biologically they must have had succession, see here the discussion compiled by Kotłowska-Różycki, Teofilakt, p. 369, n. 898.

⁴ Theoph. Sim. VIII 6, 1. According to F. Curta, *Female Dress and "Slavic" Bow Fibulae in Greece*, "Hesperia" 74 (2005), p. 132, the grave of a „wandering soldier" in Corinth may have belonged to one such Avar "traitor."

The usurpation of Phocas and the beginning of Heraclius' reign activated the enemies of the Empire. The Avars attacked Thrace. John of Nikiu reports the raids on Illyricum in 609; only Thessalonica was to hold.⁵ A serious attack came in the year 614. Isidore of Seville (from an unknown Byzantine source) received information that the Romans "in the fifth year of Heraclius' reign" (= 614) had lost Syria and Egypt to the Persians, and the Slavs had taken Greece from them.⁶ Admittedly, the chronological credibility of this record is somewhat weakened by the fact that Egypt did not fall into the hands of the Persians until 619, but the fall of Syria is correctly dated by it, so it is not excluded that the Slavic action in Greece did as well. The unknown author of the second part of *Miracula S. Demetrii* lists the details of the Slavic invasion. Before attacking Thessalonica, the Slavs had ravaged Thessaly and the surrounding islands, the islands of Greece, the Cyclades, Achaia, Epirus, most of Illyricum, and parts of Asia.⁷ Greece and Illyricum are listed separately, no mistake is possible.

The exact date of the next Slavic attack on Thessalonica is difficult to determine. However, the prevailing view is that it took place between 614 and 616,⁸ most likely in the year 614.⁹ The attackers, led by the "exarch"

5 Details: W. Pohl, *Die Awaren. Ein Steppenvolk in Mitteleuropa in 567-822 n. Chr.*, München 2002, pp. 237-238.

6 Isid. Chron., p. 479. P. Charanis, *Graecia in Isidore of Seville*, "Byzantinische Zeitschrift" 64 (1971), pp. 22-29 based on Isid. Etym. XIV 4.7 argues that *Graecia* is an imprecise term in Isidore and may mean Illyricum in general. The conclusion was generally taken up, I. Karayannopoulos, *Zur Frage der Sklavenansiedlung im griechischen Raum, Vordruck aus: Byzanz und seine Nachbarn*, München 1995 (= "Südosteuropa Jahrbuch" 26), p. 5; A. Avramea, *Le Péloponèse du IV^e au VIII^e siècle. Changements et persistances*, Paris 1997 (= *Byzantina Sorbonensia* 15), p. 71, footnote 23. With some restraint, F. Curta, *Barbarian in Dark-Age Greece: Slavs or Avars?*, in: *Civitas divino-humana in honorem annorum LX Georgii Bakalov*, Sofija 2004, p. 520. However, in addition to the general statement: *Illyricum generaliter omnis Graecia est*, Isidore lists precisely seven regions of Greece in this lemma, of which only Dalmatia is not a part of Greece proper (and perhaps this fact gave him the basis for his generalization). Therefore, when he writes about the loss of Greece by the Romans, he has in mind first of all Greece proper.

7 Mir. II 1, 179. An attempt to show that the Slavs on their primitive *monoxylai* were not able to reach the Cycladic islands is unconvincing, X. Moniaros, *Slavikes epidromes sto Aigaio stis archis tou ai. He periptose tes Chiou*, "Byzantina" 18 (1995), pp. 285-302. There is no certainty that they sailed on such boats. I don't understand why the author of *Miracula Sancti Demetrii* would mention Macedonia in the introduction to the attack on Thessaloniki, M.B. Panov, *Slavs and the Conceptual Roman Borderland in Macedonia*, in: *Continuation or Change? Borders and Frontiers in Late Antiquity and Medieval Europe. Landscape of Power Network, Military Organisation, and Commerce*, ed. G. Leighton, Ł. Różycki, P. Pranke, London-New York 2023, pp. 59-80, here 65.

8 F. Barišić, *Čuda Dimitra Solunskog kao istoriski izvori*, Beograd 1953, pp. 86-95; TNDS 1, p. 221, n. 17.

9 P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciens recueils des miracles de Saint Démétrius*, vol. 2, Commentaire, Paris 1981, pp. 91-94. Lemerle does not date the attack to "615", as F. Curta inaccurately attributes to him, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, p. 522, n. 26.

(voivode?) Chatzon, took their families and belongings on the expedition, promising to place them in the city after its capture, an interesting detail, contradicting the common belief that the Slavs underestimated cities and urban life. For the first time, the author of this part of *Miracula S. Demetrii* mentions the names of five Slavic tribes: Drugovites, Sagudates, Velegezites, Vayunites, Versites. But there were other Slavs as well.¹⁰ Despite an assault, also from the sea, the siege of several days failed.¹¹

Depressed by the defeat, the Slavs then negotiated an alliance with the Avar Khagan and with his support¹² they attacked the city once more. Their arguments, which betrayed comprehensive, strategic thinking, were interesting:

“They said it would be easy for them to take the city, as if it were destined for him (sc. Khagan), for it will not defend itself in the midst of the cities and provinces which have already been ravaged by them. It is said that it apparently is located in the middle of them, and receives all the fugitives from the Danubian lands, Pannonia, Dacia, Dardania, and the other provinces, and they flock to it.”¹³

It took Khagan two years to prepare his army (Mir. II 2, 198), so it probably happened in 616/617 and not 618.¹⁴ This time, the great siege lasted 33 days, which means that it was better prepared logistically. However, despite the use of various siege engines, including flamethrowers, the city's mighty walls resisted assaults. Peace was made and the Khagan left the city, but the Slavs remained in Macedonia.¹⁵

In 623, the Khagan appeared at the walls of Constantinople. On Sunday, July 5, he even met with Emperor Heraclius to discuss the terms for peace.¹⁶ It seems that in some connection with this Avar invasion there remains the information of an oriental source¹⁷ about the attack of the Slavs on Crete and other islands in the same year,¹⁸ where, as it should be inferred

¹⁰ Mir. II 1, 180.

¹¹ Mir. II 1, 179-195.

¹² In addition to the Avars, Bulgarians and other unnamed peoples, he also led a group of Slavs subordinate to him, other than those who had previously wanted to capture the city, Mir. II 2, 198.

¹³ Mir. II 2, 197.

¹⁴ P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciennes recueils...*, vol. 2, pp. 99-100. F. Curta, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, pp. 523 (617 or 618); M.B. Panov, *Slavs...*, pp. 64-65, 67 favours the year 618.

¹⁵ W. Pohl, *Awaren...*, pp. 242-243.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 245.

¹⁷ Gutschmid was the first to draw attention to this text in 1868, A. Gutschmid, *Zur Geschichte Griechenlands im Mittelalter*, in: idem, *Kleine Schriften*, Leipzig 1894, pp. 433-434.

¹⁸ Liber Chalipharum, in: *Anecdoton Syriakon*, vol. 1, p. 115: s.a. 934 (= A.D. 623) „Slavi Cretam caeterasque insulas invasere, atque illic pii viri Kenes. rīnenses comprehesi sunt, quorum fere viginti interfecti.” According to Land, *Anecdoton Syriakon*, pp. 168, the account comes

from the toponomastic data, some of them settled permanently.¹⁹ Max Vasmer believed (following the earlier historiography) that the attack came from the Peloponnese,²⁰ which is very likely, despite the comment of Florin Curta.²¹

The mortal clash between Emperor Heraclius and the Sassanid Empire resulted in a natural alliance between the Persians and the Avars. Khagan having gathered a huge army consisting mainly of Slavs, probably Transdanubian,²² besieged Constantinople. From July 29, 626, 80,000 men (including female Slavic warriors) under the personal command of the Khagan began their assaults. Despite the Persian help from Asia and the great courage of the Slavic soldiers attacking from the sea, the “dog”, as the Romans called the Khagan, had to retreat on the night of 7 to 8 August, forcing the Slavs, who suffered the greatest losses, to do the same.²³ In fact, the situation known from the multiple sieges of Thessalonica was repeated. The barbarians were not prepared for a long-term siege of the city, they lacked food. Some of the Slavs went over to the side of the Byzantines, and the rest were “forced” by the Khagan to leave with him. This means

from the work of Thomas the Presbyter (7th cent.). The information about the invasion of Crete by the Slavs, accepted by the *communis opinio*, was questioned by I. Karayannopoulos, *Zur Frage der Slavenansiedlung...*, pp. 7-9, on the basis of the detection of several chronological inaccuracies and other kinds of inaccuracies in the *Liber Chalipharum*. However, such a method does not provide convincing evidence, because the compiler may have been wrong in other places, but not in this one. For example, if we were to count the chronological errors of the *Chronicle of Theophanes*, we would have to disqualify it as a historical source. Some of the chronological errors of Theophanes are enumerated by I. Rochov, *Zu einigen chronologischen Irrtümern in der „Chronographie“ des Theophanes*, in: *Griechenland-Byzanz-Europa. Ein Studienband*, ed. J. Herrmann et al., Berlin 1985, pp. 43-49. It should be emphasized that the Slavic attack on Crete was synchronized with the attack of the Avar Khagan in 623. For Slavic toponyms in Crete, see: E. Kaczyńska, K.T. Wiczak, *Elementy słowiańskie w leksyce kretańskiej*, “Rozprawy Komisji Językowej. Łódzkie Towarzystwo Naukowe” 53 (2008), pp. 129-146.

¹⁹ Vasmer Max, *Die Slaven in Griechenland*, Leipzig 1970 (further: Vasmer, SG), pp. 174-176. His suggestions are based on evidence and remain valid despite criticism, especially from Greek researchers.

²⁰ Vasmer, SG, p. 14. He was followed by Bon, for example, A. Bon, *Le problème slave dans le Péloponnèse à la lumière de l'archéologie*, “Byzantion” 20 (1950), p. 13.

²¹ F. Curta, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, p. 522, n. 28.

²² There is no evidence of the participation of Slavs from Macedonia or Greece in this war.

²³ A.N. Stratos, *The Avars' Attack on Byzantium in the Year 626*, “Byzantinische Forschungen” 2 (1967), pp. 370-376; L. Waldmüller, *Die ersten Begegnungen der Slaven mit dem Christentum und den christlichen Völkern vom 6. bis zum 8. Jahrhundert*, Amsterdam 1976, pp. 265-281; W. Pohl, *Awaren...*, pp. 248-255. F. Barišić work, *Le siège de Constantinople par les Avars et les Slaves en 626*, “Byzantion” 24 (1954), pp. 371-395, remains important. Presently, M. Hurbanič, *A Topographical Note Concerning the Avar Siege of Constantinople: The Question of the Lokalization of St. Callinicus Bridge*, “Byzantinoslavica” 70 (2012), pp. 14-24; idem, *The Avar Siege of Constantinople in 626. History and Legend*, Cham/Switzerland 2019, pp. 186-228.

that immediately after the defeat, the Slavs, who were subject to the Avars, wanted to throw off the shackles of dependency.²⁴

In 656/657 Theophanes mentions the campaign of Constans II against Sclavinia, and this information is confirmed by an independent Syriac source.²⁵ As a result, the emperor defeated an anonymous king (*rex*) of the Slavs and took many of his men captive, and subjugated many.²⁶ These Slavs must have lived somewhere near Constantinople.²⁷ Little is known about other areas. In 661 A.D., Constans II stopped in Athens before his journey to Taranto in Italy, which means that Athens remained in the hands of the Romans, but the emperor arrived there by sea (*per litoralia*).²⁸ It is impossible to imagine any other interpretation of this text.

Like Athens and the cities in the eastern part of the Peloponnese, Thessalonica remained in the hands of the Romans. The Perboundos affair shows, however, that even such a large city surrounded by Slavic “neighbors”²⁹ could not feel safe. However, the threat was caused by the irresponsible attitude of the prefect of the city, whose false reports led to the arrest and murder of the king of the Rynchines Perboundos³⁰ in the first half of 676.³¹ This provoked a military reaction from several nearby Slavic tribes, the Rynchines, the Drugovites and the Strymonians in the form of a two-year, active blockade of the city, which ended with a three-day assault on the city (July 25-27, 677).³² According to Paul Lemerle, after the conclusion of the peace with the Arabs, the following year a punitive expedition of Emperor Constantine IV Pogonatus (668-685) against the Strymonians took place.³³

24 For Byzantine-Avar relations after the war, see G. Kardaras, *Byzantine-Avar Relations After 626 and the Possible Channels of Communications*, “Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi” 18 (2011), pp. 21-42.

25 Theoph. AM 6149.

26 Theoph. AM 6149; Elias Nis. 68 (AH 39).

27 F. Curta, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, p. 523, despite I. Karayannopoulos, *Zur Frage der Sklavenansiedlung im griechischen Raum, Vordruck aus: Byzanz und seine Nachbarn*, München 1995, pp. 19-20.

28 Liber pontificalis, p. 186: „Huius temporibus (sc. Vitaliani papae) venit Constantinus Augustus de regia urbe per litoralia in Athenas et exinde Tarento”. Cf. Paul. Diac. Hist. Lang. V 6. A land voyage of the ruler from the capital to Athens was out of the question at the time, as demonstrated by H. Hunger, *Athen in Byzanz. Traum und Realität*, “Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik” 40 (1991), p. 49.

29 Mir. II 4, 231.

30 Ibidem, II 4, 231-242.

31 I am adopting here the chronology of events developed by F. Barišić, *Čuda...*, pp. 106-125 and corrected by P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciennes recueils...*, vol. 2, pp. 128-132.

32 Chronology: P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciennes recueils...*, vol. 2, p. 132

33 P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciennes recueils...*, vol. 2, s. 132. See also M.B. Panov, *Slavs...*, p. 66.

The Slavs seem to be better armed than in previous sieges. They had special units of archers and warriors armed with slingshots, swords, spears and shields. One of them constructed a siege engine,³⁴ but again they were not successful.

Two further important pieces of information appear in the context of the description of this siege. Firstly, the news of Slavic warriors from among the Sclaveni, Strymonians, Rynchines, who in "combined boats" attacked grain shipments near Constantinople and Prokonnezus, and Parion, robbing cargo and taking prisoners the crews and even the people from the customs office.³⁵ The courage of the Slavic warriors who ventured as far as the straits of Constantinople and the strategic sense of their commanders in trying to block the food supply to Thessalonica with such a raid deserve to be noted. Secondly, the mention of the location of the tribe of Velegesites, who lived near Thebes and Demetrias (II 4, 254, 259, 268), and from whom the Thessalonians engaged in the struggle were going to buy grain.³⁶ This means that the Slavic tribes around Thessalonica did not enlist their direct cooperation.

With the second book *Miracula S. Demetrii*, a more or less continuous series of information about the Slavs in the Balkans ends. From then on, news of them appeared less regularly, and for large periods of time quite sporadically. And it is extremely rare that this information comes from direct informants.

The state of Roman possession in Greece is the most controversial issue.³⁷ Next to Thessalonica, Athens remained in the hands of the emperor. Numerous Western sources indicate that Athens continued to be known in Europe as a center of study.³⁸ The lists of bishops present in Constantinople indicate that, apart from Athens and Thessalonica, Corinth, Argos, and Lacedaemon were in Christian hands.³⁹ At the Council of 680/1 we meet Gaudentius, Aurelianus and Cyriacus, three bishops of Dalmatian Istria, representing Tergeste, Parentium and Pula.⁴⁰ The number of Balkan bishops at the Council of 692 is much higher, but it is striking that there are no participants from

34 Mir. II 4, 272-276.

35 Ibidem, II, 4, 277.

36 Ibidem, II 4, 254 and 268. The Slavs sometimes supplied grain to the Romans. For example, the Drugovites provided supplies for Kuver and his people, ibidem, II 5, 289.

37 A. Kaldellis, *Romanland: Ethnicity and Empire in Byzantium*, Cambridge MA 2019, p. 137, followed by M.B. Panov, *Slavs...*, p. 69, surmises that the Slavs did not exterminate or force the entire local Roman population in Greece to flee, but settled among them, gradually eliminating the Roman administrative network. A very attractive hypothesis, but impossible to prove yet.

38 References to Western students in Athens in the earlier Middle Ages have been compiled and sceptically evaluated as a topos by F. Curta, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, p. 523, footnote 32. His arguments are not convincing.

39 V. Popović, *Kubrat, Kuver i Asparuh*, "Starinar" 37 (1986), p. 119.

40 R. Bartož, *Istrska cerkev v 7. i 8. stoletju (od smrti Gregorija Velikega do Rižanskego Placita)*, "Acta Istriae" 2 (1994), p. 68.

Athens, Corinth, Argos, or Lacedaemon.⁴¹ However, this does not equate to the disappearance of these bishoprics at that time, but probably some difficulties of the clergy with reaching the Council (Slavic threat?), because, for example, we know that Corinth had a bishop at that time.⁴² There is not the slightest certainty whether the "Avars" in Sicily, who are described in the apocryphal *Life of St. Pancratius* by Evagrius, written at the end of the 7th or the beginning of the 8th century, are in fact Slavs and not authentic Avars.⁴³ Nevertheless, there are traces of Slavic settlements in Syracuse.

In 722 Willibald, later bishop of Eichstätt and saint, traveling in the company of two other pilgrims from Syracuse, reached *ad urbem Manafasiam* (sc. Monembasia/Monemvasia) in *Slawinia terrae*.⁴⁴ From there, leaving Corinth aside, he reached Chios, and from there to Asia Minor and Cyprus.⁴⁵ For him, therefore, the Peloponnese was a Slavic land.⁴⁶

The Slavic settlement in Greece must have made great progress, for in the work *De thematibus*, attributed to the Emperor Constantine Porphyrogenitus, we find the statement that during the reign of Constantine V (741-775) the whole country "was Slavized and became barbarous".⁴⁷ It is doubtful

41 P. Yannopoulos, *Métropoles du Péloponnèse mésobyzantin: un souvenir des invasions avaro-slave*, "Byzantion" 63 (1993), p. 395, explains the absence of the Greek bishops by the fact that neither the Pope nor the Illyrian suffragan bishops participated in the Council. However, this is not an totally accurate observation since the Bishop of Dyrrachium and other bishops (including some other bishops from the area under the jurisdiction of Rome) were present. These are the bishops of Thessalonica, Stobi, Edessa, Amphipolis, Edessa, Ainos, Philippi, see V. Popović, *Kubrat, Kuver I Asparuh...*, p. 123.

42 V. Grumel, *Les registes des actes du Patriarcat de Constantinople*, vol. 1: *Les actes des patriarches*, fasc. 1: *Les registes de 381 à 715*, Paris 1972, no. 316. This anonymous bishop was one of three clerics sent to Rome by Patriarch Paul III (688-694) for the trial of Gregory of Agrigent.

43 They were taken prisoner, as it were, in the region of Dyrrachium and Athens, see to the whole, T. Olaios, *Quelques remarques sur une peuplade slave en Hellade*, "Vizantijskij Vremennik" 55 (1994), pp. 107-108; F. Curta, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, pp. 530-532.

44 *Vita Willibaldi episcopi Eichstetensis*, p. 93, line 13.

45 *Ibidem*, p. 93, lines 11-15.

46 According to F. Curta, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, p. 530, the use of the term *Slawinia* is a copy of the Greek *Sklavinia* and betrays a Constantinopolitan perspective, not eyewitness information. This is unconvincing. If the author of *Vita Willibaldi* had copied the Greek model of the ethnic name Slavs, then the text would have been "in *Sklavinia terrae*", and it is "in *Slawinia terrae*". This is best proof that the information did not come from the Greeks.

47 CP, *De thematibus*, II 6. Another translation: "the whole country was stricken with calamity and became barbaric," TNDS 1, p. 297. In the scientific literature since the time of J.P. Falmerayer, *Geschichte der Halbinsel Morea während des Mittelalters. Teil 1. Untergang der peloponnesischen Hellenen und Wiederbevölkerung des leeren Bodens durch slavische Völkstämme*, Stuttgart-Tübingen 1930, pp. 3-14 and Niederle, *SlovStar*, II, 1, pp. 434 ff., the ethnic interpretation has prevailed. Brzóstowska and Swoboda, the authors of TNDS 1, p. 297 unexpectedly accepted G. Tsaras's translation and interpretation, *Le verbe ἐσθλαβῶθη chez Constantin Porphyrogenete*, "Cyrillomethodianum" 1 (1971), pp. 26-57, especially pp. 29 and 36. Yet another hypothesis was

that the great epidemic of the plague that broke out in Sicily in 745/746 and spread to Monemvasia, Hellas, the surrounding islands and Constantinople had anything to do with this process of Slavization.⁴⁸ If it fatally affected many Greeks, it could not have completely avoided the Slavs.⁴⁹ It is doubtful, therefore, that the plague contributed to the expansion of Slavic settlement in Greece. Parts of the country remained in Roman hands, but in Constantinople the famous grammarian Euphemius mocked a man from the Peloponnese, "proud of his good birth," in an incessantly repeated iamb, "a cunning-looking Slavic mouth",⁵⁰ which means that in the eyes of the Byzantines the Slavs could distinguish themselves from them by their physical appearance, but it also means that the capital knew about the Slavization of this peninsula, which is confirmed on a large scale by toponomastics.⁵¹

Ten years after the Great Plague (754/755), Constantine V gathered families from the "islands", "Hellas" and "southern parts"⁵² in order to repopulate the capital heavily affected by the effects of the plague.⁵³ In the year 765/766, the same emperor brought craftsmen and workers from various parts of the Empire to build new water tanks and baths in Constantinople and to rebuild the aqueduct of Valentinian I, which had been destroyed during the invasion of the Avars (in 626). The proportions between the different realms are instructive. 5,200 people came from Thrace, 1,200 from Asia and Pontus, and only 500 from "Hellas" and the "islands." This does not give any basis for the claim that Greece experienced significant demographic growth in the middle of the eighth century.⁵⁴

At the end of the eighth century, the time of almost unlimited Slavic rule in Greece began to come to an end.

put forward by D.J. Georgakas, *Beiträge zur Deutung als slawisch erklärter Namen*, "Byzantinische Zeitschrift" 41 (1941), p. 353, suggested that already in VIII the term σκλάβος/ σκλάβος was supposed to mean „slave/servus, subjugated", which was recognized by some Greek scholars, but was finally refuted by F. Dölger, *Ein Fall slavischer Einsiedlung im Hinterland von Thessalonike im 10. Jahrhundert*, München 1952, pp. 19-28, who has shown that the term "sklabos" did not appear in this sense until 1136!

48 Theoph. AM 6238. The plague lasted until 747/748 - this date is given by Kleinchronik 2. 4, ed. P. Schreiner, vol. 1, p. 47.

49 Rightly Swoboda, TNDS 1, p. 329, n. 1.

50 CP, De thematibus, II 6. Another translation: TNDS 1, p. 297.

51 Vasmer, SG, pp. 123-174; Ph. Malingoudis, *Studien zu den slavischen Ortsnamen Griechenlands. 1. Slavische Flurnamen aus der messenischen Mani*, Wiesbaden 1981 (whole).

52 The term seems to be applied imprecisely to the Hellas/Peloponnese area, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor. Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, ed. and transl. C. Mango, R. Scott, G. Greatrex, Oxford 1997, p. 594, footnote 5.

53 Theoph. AM 6247.

54 As suggests P. Yannopoulos, *Métropoles du Péloponnèse mésobyzantin: un souvenir des invasions avaro-slave*, "Byzantion" 63 (1993), p. 391.

In 783, the Empire went on a counteroffensive in Greece. A large army led by the logothete Staurakios set out from the capital “against the tribes of the Slavs”. The Roman army came to Thessalonica and “Hellas” subdued them all (sc. Slavs) and forced them to pay tribute. Staurakios even invaded the Peloponnese, from whence he returned, bringing numerous captives and carrying huge booty.⁵⁵ An oriental source knows that the Roman commander left a garrison in the Peloponnese,⁵⁶ which may be connected with the creation of the *théma* Peloponnese. On January 24, 784, Staurakios celebrated his victory in Constantinople.⁵⁷ This success opened the era of the restoration of Byzantine influence in Greece. In the Peloponnese, at least three important urban centres were under Roman control, as indicated by the participation of the metropolit of Corinth and the bishops of Patras and Monemvasia in the Second Council of Nicaea (787). Bishops from Athens, Oreos, Zakynthos, Nicopolis, Dyrrachium and Cotor also took part in the deliberations.⁵⁸

In 799 Akameros, archon of the Slavs of Velezetia, i.e. the Velegesites dwelling in Boeotia, from the instigation of the Romans with Hellas, tried to free the relatives of Emperor Constantine V, who were in exile in Athens, and to proclaim one of them emperor. The energetic action of Empress Irene nipped the rebellion in the bud. We are not informed about the fate of Akameros.⁵⁹

In the north, Empress Irene and her army reached as far as Philippolis (Plovdiv) in 784, restoring Roman rule in Thrace. There, in the years 789-802, the imperial administration established *théma* “Macedonia”.⁶⁰ By 824/826, the theme Thessaloniki had been established, which meant that Byzantium had regained some political control in the historical Macedonia.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Theoph. AM. 782/783; Kedrenos II, p. 21.

⁵⁶ Mich. Syr. Chron. XII 4. The same author has the illusion (III 13) that the Peloponnese was then in the hands of the “Arabs”- presumably the “Avars.” Likewise Bar Hebraeus, *Chronography. The Patriarchs. From Adam to Moses*, vol. 1, ed. and transl. E.A. Wallis Budge, London 1932, p. 120.

⁵⁷ N. Oikonomides, *A Note on the Campaign of Staurakios in the Peloponnese (783/4)*, “Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta” 38 (1999/2000), pp. 61-66.

⁵⁸ P. Yannopoulos, *Métropoles du Péloponnèse mésobyzantin...*, pp. 395, 398-399; A. Avramea, *Le Péloponnèse...*, p. 188.

⁵⁹ Theoph. AM 798/799; Vasmer, SG, p. 16. On the title of archon, W. Seibt, *Siegel als Quelle für Slawenarchonten in Griechenland*, “Studies in Byzantine Sigillography” 6 (1999), pp. 35-36.

⁶⁰ A. Delikari, Η εικόνα της Μακεδονίας και η εννοια „Μακεδονικότητας” στους σλαβικούς λαούς της Βαλκανικής κατά τη Βυζαντινή περίοδο, in: Μακεδονικές ταυτότητες στο χρόνο Διεπιστημονικές προσεγγίσεις. Επιμέλεια, ed. I. Stefanides, B. Blasides, E. Kofós, Thessaloniki 2008, p. 137.

⁶¹ A. Stavridou-Zafraka, *The Development of the Theme Organisation in Macedonia*, in: *Byzantine Macedonia, Identity, Image and History. Papers from the Melbourne Conference July 1995*, ed. J. Burke, R. Scott, Melbourne 2000, pp. 132-133; A. Gkoutzioukostas, *The Prefect of Illyricum and*

The Romans encountered much greater resistance from the Slavs in the south, in the Peloponnese.

The Slavs, conquered by Stauriakos, soon took up arms. Constantine Porphyrogenitus, citing an unknown source, reports:

“Nikephorus reigned over the Romans when they (sc. the Sclavi), who were in the Peloponnese, revolted, and first destroyed the settlements of the neighbouring Greeks, plundering them, then marched against the inhabitants of Patras, trampled the fields before the walls, and besieged the city itself, having also the African Saracens with them.”⁶²

Before being informed by the defenders of Patras residing in Corinth strategos of the theme the Peloponnese⁶³ came to their aid; the inhabitants of the city, miraculously supported by St. Andrew, defeated the Slavs. “Invaders”⁶⁴ made numerous devastations and plunders in the area of “Achaia” (= the Peloponnese). They also took prisoners.⁶⁵ After the defeat, they suffered losses themselves:

The emperor “therefore decreed that the enemies with their families, relatives, all who came with them, and with all their possessions, should be assigned to the church of the Apostle (sc. St. Andrew) in the metropolis of Patras, where the summoned disciple of Christ performed such a feat. In this matter the emperor (sc. Nikephoros I) issued a document for this metropolis.”⁶⁶

the Prefect of Thessaloniki, “Byzantiaka” 30 (2012-2013), p. 75. A balanced outline of the history of Macedonia in the Middle Ages (Byzantine, Bulgarian and Serbian) is offered by A. Delikari, *Η εικόνα της Μακεδονίας...*, pp. 134-184. The author also took a closer look at Slavic toponyms from the region of Macedonian Florina: A. Delikari, *Το σλαβικό υπόβαθρο της Φλώρινας...*, pp. 123-149.

⁶² Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*, ed. R.J.H. Jenkins, G. Moravcsik, new, revised edition, Washington DC 1967, c. 49.

⁶³ The theme may have been created shortly after the campaign of Stauriakos in 783, T. Živković, *The Date of the Creation of the Theme of Peloponnese, “Byzantina Symmeikta”* 13 (1999), pp. 148-154.

⁶⁴ According to Swoboda, *TNDS* 3, p. 475, n. 78, it may be the “Arab fleet”. For O. Kresten, *Zur Echtheit des Sigillon des Kaisers Nikephoros I für Patras, “Römische Historische Mitteilungen”* 19 (1977), p. 54, it was not a revolt of the Slavs, but their attack on the last Byzantine enclave in the Peloponnese, and only a hundred years later Constantine Porphyrogenitus recognized these events as a revolt. However, in the absence of other sources, these hypotheses cannot be considered convincing. Regarding the Saracens, K. Belke, *Einige Überlegungen zum Sigillon Kaisers Nikephoros’ für Patrai, “Jahrbuch der österreichischen Byzantinistik”* 46 (1996), p. 90. According to F. Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, ca. 500 to 1050: The Early Middle Ages*, Edinburgh 2011, p. 159, footnote 13, there may be no connection between the Saracen fleet attack on Patras and the Slavic revolt.

⁶⁵ On this Slavic revolt, N. Oikonomides, *St. Andrew, Joseph the Hymnographer, and the Slavs of Patras*, in: *AEIMON. Studies Presented to Lennart Rydén on His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. J.O. Rosenqvist, Uppsala 1996, pp. 71-78.

⁶⁶ CP, *De administrando imperio*, c. 49.

We do not have the slightest mention of the cause of the uprising. According to Stanisław Turlej, it could have been provoked by the influx of Greek people from Sicily to the peninsula.⁶⁷ However, it was most likely about the deterioration of the living conditions of those Slavs who were directly affected by the success of Stauriakos' expedition in 783. According to Chronicle of Monemvasia, the descendants of the former inhabitants of the Peloponnese returned from Italy only after the defeat of this Slavic revolt. The position of the losers was made even worse, for from then on, they became *the adscripticii* of the ecclesiastical metropolis of Patras.⁶⁸ Unfortunately, we do not know whether all Slavs from the Peloponnese took part in the rebellion or what happened to them.

During the reign of Emperor Theophilus (829-842), new Slavic uprisings broke out in the Peloponnese, which were only suppressed during the reign of Michael III (842-867).

During the reign of the Emperor Theophilus and his son Michael, the Sclavi of the Peloponnese rebelled and became independent by robbery, abduction, plunder, arson, and theft. When Michael, son of Theophilus, was in power, the protospatharius Theoctistus, surnamed Bryennius was sent with a great power and a considerable force of Thracians, Macedonians, and other western themes, to defeat them and compel them to obey. So he defeated and subdued all the Slavs and other rebels of the Peloponnese. Only Ezerites and Milingi⁶⁹ rest in the vicinity of Lacedemonia and Helos.⁷⁰

The boundaries of the theme Peloponnese are elusive to us, but it is difficult to doubt that they covered a large part of the Peninsula. Not only did all the Slavs living in this theme rebel, but also other inhabitants.⁷¹

67 S. Turlej, *The Chronicle of Monemvasia. The Migration of the Slavs and the Church Conflicts in the Byzantine Source from the Beginning of the 9th Century*, Cracow 2001, p. 153, and acceptively F. Curta, *Barbarians in Dark-Age Greece...*, p. 534 and n. 69.

68 G. Litavrin, *Iz kommentarja k 49-oj glave truda Konstantina Bagrjanorodnogo „Ob upravlennii imperii”*, „Byzantina” 13 (1985), pp. 1347-1353.

69 The Slavic character of these tribes was not questioned, but only the Slavic origin of their names, H. Birnbaum, *Noch einmal zu den slawischen Millingen auf der Peloponnes*, in: *Festschrift für Herbert Bräuer*, ed. R. Olesch, H. Rothe, Köln-Wien 1986, pp. 15-26. The author defends the etymology of the Slavic name Milingi (based on Polish onomastics) against the etymology of the Greek language.

70 CP, *De administrando imperio*, c. 50.

71 A punitive expedition may have been sent as early as the regency of Empress Theodora, A. Bon, *Le Peloponnèse byzantin jusqu'en 1204*, Paris 1951, pp. 46-47; W. Swoboda, *TNDS* 3, p. 476, n. 82.; T. Wasilewski, *Bizancjum i Słowianie w IX wieku. Studia z dziejów stosunków politycznych i kulturalnych*, Warszawa 1972, pp. 93-95. For him the expedition with Theoktistus Bryennius did not set out until 845; F. Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks...*, p. 139 (after 842).

The reason was probably the imposed compulsory services to the state, including military service and financial tributes. As a result of the failure of the uprising, tributes of 300 and 60 golden nomismata was imposed on the Ezerites and Milingi, respectively. These were small amounts and rather showed that both tribes, living in the hard-to-reach mountain range of Taygetus, were far from a complete conquest,⁷² and Roman supremacy over them rather nominal, because during the reign of Romanus, protospatharios John Proteuon, strategos of the theme Peloponnese, reported to the emperor about the full disobedience of the Ezerites and Milingi to the Roman authority. The impetus for this may have been the invasion of the Bulgarian Tsar Simeon, whose troops reached as far as the Peloponnese in 921.⁷³ The new strategist, Krinites Arotas, was ordered by the emperor to restore the rebellious Slavs to obedience. The war, dated imprecisely to the first half of the ninth century,⁷⁴ lasted from March to November, despite burning crops and plundering the land of the Slavs. It was not until the coming winter that they were willing to negotiate, "promising to be submissive, they asked for an agreement and forgiveness in matters in which they had recently been at fault".⁷⁵ As a result of the war, the strategos Krinites increased their tribute to 600 nomismata (solidi) for each tribe,⁷⁶ which was still a small sum. Under the next strategos of the Peloponnesian, Bardas Platypodes, there was a rebellion of him and his entourage and the expulsion of the unknown Leon Agelastos, as a result of which there was an attack by the mysterious Sclavesians on this theme. The Milingi and Ezerites took advantage of the situation and asked Emperor Romanus to forgive them additional tributary benefits and they could pay as before their rebellion (i.e. 60 and 300 nomismata, respectively). The emperor fearing that the Sclavesians (Byzantine troops from Asia Minor,⁷⁷ probably also of Slavic origin) did not ally themselves with the Milingi and Ezerites and did not completely

72 This was rightly pointed out by Vasmer, SG, p. 17.

73 F. Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks, ca. 500 to 1050: The Early Middle Ages*, Edinburgh 2011, p. 171.

74 A. Vasiljev, *Slavjane v Grecii*, "Vizantijskij Vremennik" 5 (1898), p. 425 (dated to 941); Vasmer, SG, p. 17. The war is now dated to 922, F. Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks...*, p. 171.

75 CP, *De administrando imperio*, c. 50. The Slavs evaded military service, financial burdens, and did not accept an archon appointed by the Roman strategos.

76 CP, *De administrando imperio*, c. 50.

77 On the Sclavesians, F. Curta, *The Edinburgh History of the Greeks...*, pp. 172 f.; W. Swoboda, *Sklavesianoï*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 5, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1975, p. 225 considers the problem of their identification to be open. I do not share the view that the origin of the name is Slavic. It is evidently Greek - like the Sermesiani - and probably means Slavs mixed with other peoples.

destroy this theme, issued a golden bull restoring both Slavic tribes to the original dimension of their tribute.⁷⁸

The Roman order in the Peloponnese was imposed only to a certain extent, as various attacks of the Laconian Slavs in the tenth century are known from hagiographic texts.⁷⁹

In 813/814?⁸⁰ St. Gregory the Decapolita decided to go by ship from Ainos (ca. 15 km from Philippi) to Christupolis (both cities in Macedonia). There, having left the ship, he came across Slavonic robbers, who were plundering the ships he encountered on the coast in boats. The saint fell into their hands, but the Slavs freed him, crossing him to the other side of the river he was about to cross.⁸¹ Other times, between 835-841⁸² Gregory the Decapolita, together with his disciple, wanted to go from Thessalonica to the mountains located in the Slavic lands, where "after a few days a great uprising broke out, [instigated] by the *egzarchon* of that part of Sclavinia; streams of blood flowed like a river, and the area was destroyed by fire and plunged into terrible darkness."⁸³ F. Dvornik suggested that the uprising broke out in the area of Drugovites,⁸⁴ which is not certain, but if the title of man, who instigated the rebellion, *egzarchon* (ἐξάρχων), is a linguistic hybrid: the Latin "ex" (former) combined with the Greek "archon", then we would be dealing with a rebellion of the former archon of these Slavs. Then it can be assumed that the reason for his rebellion could have been the emperor replacing him with someone else.⁸⁵ The outcome of this uprising is unknown.

78 CP, De administrando imperio, c. 50. As to the date of the Slavic uprising during the reign of Romanus I, most extensively R.J.H. Jenkins, *The Date of the Slav Revolt in Peloponnese under Romanus I*, in: *Late Classical and Mediaeval Studies in Honour of Albert Mathias Friend, Jr.*, ed. K. Weitzmann, New Jersey 1955, pp. 204-211.

79 A. Vasiljev, *Slavjane v Grecii...*, pp. 426 ff.

80 W. Swoboda, TNSD 3, p. 150 n. 1, discusses the chronology of this journey at length. See also: T. Wasilewski, *Bizancjum i Słowianie...*, 150, footnote 1; ibidem, p. 76 advocates the year 820. F. Curta, *The Edinburgh History of Greece...*, p. 141 suggests the year 833.

81 F. Dvornik, *La Vie de saint Grégoire le Décapolite et les Slaves macédoniens au IXe siècle*, Paris 1926, c. 10; P. Tsorbarzoglu, *The "Megalopolis of Thessaloniki" and Its World According to the hagiographical Texts of the Middle Byzantine Period*, in: *Byzantine Macedonia. Art, Architecture, Music, and Hagiography. Papers for the Melbourne Conference July 1995*, ed. J. Burke, R. Scott, Melbourne 2001, p. 127.

82 F. Curta, *The Edinburgh History of Greece...*, p. 142.

83 F. Dvornik, *La Vie de saint Grégoire le Décapolite...*, c. 17; P. Tsorbarzoglu, *The „Megalopolis of Thessaloniki“...*, p. 128. TNSD 3, p. 149.

84 F. Dvornik, *La Vie de saint Grégoire le Décapolite...*, c. 35. However, the uprising should probably be associated with Smolians (Smoleńce), Swoboda, TNSD 3, p. 151, note 4.

85 Against hypothesis of the dependence of this Sklavinia on the Emperor, Swoboda, TNSD 3, pp. 151-152, n. 5

From the 8th century onwards, the Slavs in Macedonia gradually became dependent partly on Byzantium and partly on Bulgaria.⁸⁶

Some of the Peloponnesian Slavs retained not only their ethnic identity for a very long time,⁸⁷ but also political independence. In the middle of the thirteenth century, the Milingi were defeated and conquered by the Franks, but in 1293 we hear of these Slavs conquering the city of Kalamata.⁸⁸ The Milingi seem to have retained some independence of the Turkish conquest, but presumably under Byzantine control. The inscription from Oitylon dated to 1331/2 and the inscription from Kampinari dated to 1337/8 (both places are in Laconia) mention, among other persons, Konstantinos Spanis, who served as drongos of Melingi, the commander of this tribe.⁸⁹ At the end of the fourteenth century, Venice tried to incite and push the Slavs of Maina against the Byzantine despots Mistra, and Theodore.⁹⁰ A contemporary of Emperor Michael Palaeologus (1391-1425), the poet Mazaris, writing around 1415 about the ethnic mosaic around Mistra in the Peloponnese, also mentioned Σθλαβινολ.⁹¹

Laskaris Kananos, who travelled personally (or not) in the first half of the 15th century in the northern countries, including the Baltic ones, provides valuable information that in the vicinity of the city of Lübeck there is a country called Σθλανουνία, and its inhabitants speak the same language as the people of the Siggiotes in the Peloponnese, *i.e.* the inhabitants

86 This process was recently outlined by M.B. Panov, *Slavs...*, pp. 69-75.

87 The inhabitants of Maina (Mani) in the Peloponnese according to Constantine Porphyrogenitus, were not Slavs, but descendants of the ancient Romans, called Hellenes (pagans). In his opinion, they inhabited the southeastern Peloponnese in the hinterland of Monemvasia as far as the Malea peninsula. Modern research does not fully support this thesis, for in Maina we find Slavic toponomastics, Ph. Maligoudis, *Studien zu den slavischen Ortsnamen Griechenlands. 1. Slavische Flurnamen aus der messenischen Mani*, Wiesbaden 1981. We have also other evidence that it was a Slavic country, A. Bon, *Le Peloponnèse byzantin...*, pp. 71-74. If the Slavs encountered the original Greeks there when they arrived, they were probably Slavicized. In addition, they lived in the southern part of Taygetus, as far as the Matapan and Tenaro peninsulas. On the contribution of toponomastic studies to this discussion (still underdeveloped), see also Ph. Maligoudis, *Toponymy and History. Observations Concerning the Slavonic Toponymy on the Peloponnese, "Cyrillomethodianum"* 7 (1983), pp. 99-111.

88 A. Vasiljev, *Slavjane v Grecii...*, p. 436.

89 H. Arhweiler-Glykatzi, *Une inscription méconnue sur les Mélingues du Taygète*, "Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique" 86 (1962), pp. 1-10. See also valuable comments A. Avramea, *Ο „Τζάσις τῶν Μεληγγῶν"*. Νέα ἀνάγνωσις ἐπιγραφῶν ἐξ Οἰτύλου, "Parnassos" 16 (1974), pp. 288-300. J. Koder, *Zur Frage der slavischen Siedlungsgebiete im mittelalterlichen Griechenland*, "Byzantinische Zeitschrift" 71 (1978), p. 319 interprets these texts as hint of the strengthened self-esteem of the Milingi in the Palaeologi era.

90 A. Vasiljev, *Slavjane v Grecii...*, p. 437.

91 D. M. Nicol, *Byzantium and Greece*, in: idem, *Studies in Late Byzantine History and Prosopography*, London 1986, p. 19.

of the Taygetus mountains.⁹² The Slavs in Laconia, in the mountains of Taygetus and on Tainaron are mentioned in the 15th century by the Byzantine chronicler Laonikos Chalkokondyles, who noticed the ethnic and linguistic unity of all Slavs (but also their territorial dispersion), including the Poles, Sarmatians (sc. Ruthenians) and those living in the south of Europe.⁹³

Studying their traces in the Ottoman period is beyond the scope of this text. Max Vasmer's conclusion, however, that with the massive influx of Albanians to Greece in the 15th century, the Slavs disappeared as a separate ethnic unit, melting among the newcomers and Greeks is very risky.⁹⁴ Later sources leave no doubt that the Slavs in Macedonia, Epirus, and even in the Peloponnese survived not only biologically, but also maintained the rests their ethnic identity for a long time, in Macedonia and Thrace to the present day.

SKLAVINIAS-SLAVIC LANDS IN GREECE

In general, there is no difficulty in understanding what the Byzantines of the eighth and early ninth centuries meant by Slavina, or rather Sklavinia. The Sklavinias were regions inhabited by Slavs under the leadership

⁹² Text of Lascaris Kananos has been published and translated into various languages many times since 1881, see J. Harris, *When did Lascaris Kananos Travel in the Baltic Lands?*, "Byzantion" 80 (2010), pp. 173-182, here 173-174 notes 2-3. I quote according to, G. Labuda, *Fragmenty dziejów Słowiańszczyzny Zachodniej*, vol. 2, Poznań 1964, p. 261. Vasmer, SG, p. 19, believes that this is not possible from a linguistic point of view. However, this conclusion stems from his conviction that the Greek Slavs are in no way descended from the "Western Slavs", which, given the genetic research among the Maynots, is not obvious, since among the four "genomic" Slavic populations found in this region of the Peloponnese there are also "Poles", G. Stamatoyannopoulos et alii, *Genetics of the Peloponnesian Populations and the Theory of Extinction of the Medieval Peloponnesian Greeks*, "European Journal of Human Genetics", 8 March 2017, p. 7. With regard to Zygos, C. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Âge*, vol. 1, Paris 1882, p. XXII.

⁹³ Laonikos Chalkokondyles, *Histories*, I, 31, 38; III, 30, with the comments of A. Kaldellis, *A New Herodotos. Laonikos Chalkokondyles on the Ottoman Empire, the Fall of Byzantium, and the Emergence of the West*, Washington D.C. 2014, pp. 78-84. Also Venetian sources from the end of the fifteenth century call some lands of the Peloponnese (Morea) "Sclavonia", C. Sathas, *Documents Inédits...*, vol. 1, no. 298.

⁹⁴ Vasmer, SG, p. 19. See Slavic toponyms and anthroponyms in the Turkish cadastre of the Peloponnese, ca. 1460-1463, G.C. Liakopoulos, *The Early Ottoman Peloponnese. A Study in the Light of an Annotated editio princeps of the TT10-1/4662 Ottoman Taxation Cadastre (ca. 1460-1463)*, London 2020, pp. 211-228. The Slavic nomenclature among the Timariot estates has already been pointed out by P. Assenova, Th. Kacori, R. Stojkov, *Oikonymes et anthroponymes de Péloponnèse vers la moitié du XVe siècle*, in: *Actes du XIe Congrès international des sciences onomastiques*. Sofia, 28. VI-4. VII 1972, ed. V.L. Georgiev, I.V. Duridanov, J.D. Zaimov, vol. 1, Sofia 1974, p. 70. Slavic mercenaries in the Venetian granizon in Negroponte, C. Capizzi, *Mercenari slavi, albanesi e greci nella quarnigione veneta di Negroponte (1460-1462)*, "Atti e memorie della Società Dalmata di Storia Patria (Roma)" 3 (2001), 3, pp. 47-71.

of chieftains, over which the administrative control of the Empire was more theoretical than real. The difficulty, if any, arises when one tries to determine the location of these Sclavinias, wrote Peter Charanis.⁹⁵ However, there are difficulties,⁹⁶ but the American scholar correctly saw the connection between the location of the Slavic tribes settling on the territory of the Roman Empire and their gradual loss of political independence and inclusion in the orbit of political influence of Constantinople, and later within the Byzantine administrative integration.⁹⁷

According to the *Geography* of Pseudo-Moses of Khoren, there were 25 Slavic tribes living in Dacia before the invasion of the empire.⁹⁸ A large number, but not impossible to accept. It is debatable whether the Armenian geographer had any authentic source at his disposal here, but until it is convincingly shown that it was a figment of his imagination, I am inclined to accept this number. Slavic tribes began to settle in the Roman lands south of the Danube starting from the eighties of the sixth century. Earlier Slavic settlements in the era of Justinian I were negligible and short-lived, and the settlement of Slavs in the Balkans as Roman mercenary soldiers is problematic at this time.⁹⁹

The location of the named Slavic tribes settled in the Roman Empire in the lands that slowly return under the control of Constantinople from the end of the eighth century onwards is questionable. The place of their early settlement was ancient Macedonia.

Drugovites, sitting near Thessalonica, to the west of that city; according to Lubor Niederle, between it and Berroe.¹⁰⁰ It is known that they lived on the plain of Keramisios, which E. Chatziantoniou recently proposes to locate either in the valley of the river Axios (now the river Vardar), or north-east of Lake

95 P. Charanis, *Observations on the History of Greece during The Early Middle Ages*, VI. *Sclavinias*, in: idem, *Studies on the Demography of the Byzantine Empire. Collected Studies. With a Preface by Speros Vryonis Jr.*, London 1972, p. 11.

96 The basic research controversies and positions are presented in W. Swoboda, *Sklawinia...*, pp. 228-229. Note that Constantine Porphyrogenitus uses this term not only in relation to the Balkan Slavs, but also to the Ruthenian Slavs.

97 On the organization of Sklavinias, M. Νυσταζοπούλου-Πελεκίδου, *Σλαβικές εγκαταστάσεις στη μεσαιωνική Ελλάδα. Γενική επισκοπήση*, Αθήνα 1993, pp. 38-45.

98 Armenian text: A. Maricq, *Notes sur les Slaves dans le Péloponnèse et en Bithynie et sur l'emploi de „slave” comme appellatif*, "Byzantion" 22 (1952), p. 342, French translation, p. 343.

99 V. Georgiev (in 1958) established 12 Slavic names in the work „On Buildings” by Procopius of Caesarea, what according to L. Maksimović, *Prokops Schrift De aedificis als toponomastische Quelle*, in: *Byzantina Mediterranea. Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. K. Belke, E. Kislinger, A. Külzer, M.A. Stassinopoulou, Wien-Köln-Weimar 2007, pp. 407-416, must be limited to "no more than four." But even the toponyms he indicated seem uncertain to me.

100 Niederle, *SlovStar*. II, 2, p. 424. The name is supposed to be the same as the name of the "Russian" Dregovitii. As for the form of "Dregovitii" of Russian chronicles, Niederle, *SlovStar*. II, 2, p. 424, n. 2; Lowmiański, *PP*, 2, pp. 98-99.

Gianniston (Loudias).¹⁰¹ Sources suggest as many as two or even three branches of this tribe, but it is also possible that their tribal area was expanding over time.¹⁰² The Drugovites were one of the numerous Slavic tribes that took part in the great invasion of ca. 614 and the siege of Thessalonica. The Slavs then took their families and belongings in the hope of living in the conquered city (Mir. II 1, 179). Their *kings* took part in the last siege of Thessalonica by the Slavs in 677 (Mir. II 4, 255), which means that there was a great tribe, consisting of at least two groups. Referring to the first half of the 7th century, the information that the Drugovites, at the behest of the emperor, provided food for four months to the people of the renegade of the Avar Kuber who settled on the plain of Keramison (Mir. II 4, 289-290), may or may not testify to the temporary dependence of this tribe on the Empire.¹⁰³ Peter, the first attested *basilikos protospatharios* and *archon Drougoubiton*, is dated only to first half of ninth century.¹⁰⁴ Before 904 (the date of the conquest of Thessalonica by the Muslims), however, the Drugovites were certainly dependent on the Byzantines, as evidenced by the obligation to send armed aid to the city. However, they acted sluggishly and generally failed, which means that the form of dependency was not very strict. In the ninth century there was a bishopric of Drugovitia under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Thessalonica, and in the tenth century the strategos of Drugovitia appears under the command of the duke of Thessalonica. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, a separate theme, Drugovitia, was created. "Drugoviteias episkopos" is mentioned as early as 1580.¹⁰⁵

Sagudates. Listed among the tribes aiming to capture Thessalonica in 614 (Mir. II 1, 179) and again in 904 paying tribute and assisting the Thessalonians in defending the city against the Saracens.¹⁰⁶ They lived west of Thessalonica and are considered neighbors of the Drugovites. In the tenth century,

101 E. Chatziantoniou, Συμβολή στον εντοπισμό της σλαβικής εγκατάστασης των Δρουγουβιτών, in: *Philotimia. Studies in Honour of Alkmene Stavridou-Zafraka*, ed. Th. Korres, P. Katsoni, I. Leontiadis, A. Gkoutzioukostas, Thessaloniki 2011, pp. 105-133, with a thorough discussion of the previous literature on the subject. See more generally, M. Νυσταζοπούλου-Πελεκίδου, Σλαβικές εγκαταστάσεις..., pp. 43, 121-123. Regarding the creation of the Drugovitia theme, A. Gkoutzioukostas, *The Theme Drougoubiteia*, "Studies in Byzantine Sigillography" 13 (2019), pp. 107-119.

102 W. Swoboda, *Drugowici*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 1, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1961, p. 389; idem, *TNDS* 1, p. 221, note 18; F. Barišić, B. Ferjančić, *Vesti Dimitrija Homatjana o vlasti Drugovita*, "Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta" 20 (1981), pp. 41-58.

103 For imperial control over the Drugovites, A. Gkoutzioukostas, *The Theme Drougoubiteia*..., p. 108.

104 Ibidem, p. 109.

105 Vasmer, SG, p. 177. On the history of this bishopric, E. Chatziantoniou, *The Archbishopric of Thessaloniki from the Mid 8th Century to 1430. Hierarchical Order-Ecclesiastical Area-Administrative Organisation*, Thessaloniki 2007, pp. 134-138.

106 Io. Cam. De expugnatione Thessalonicae, VI. 5-7.

they occupied a large plain extending towards Berroe (now Ber). In 1152, a document issued to the monastery of Our Lady of Kosmosotira near Enos on the Marica River (ancient Hebros) mentions *the market of Sagudaus*. In the *Partitio terrarum Regni Romani* from the beginning of the thirteenth century, some territory appears under the name Sagudai and was granted to Venice. These and other clues suggest that a part of this people lived somewhere on the Chalkidiki Peninsula as far as Mount Athos.¹⁰⁷ L. Niederle also drew attention to the “colony” of the Sagudates in Bithynia, Asia Minor.¹⁰⁸ The name of the tribe is considered to be non-Slavic. M. Vasmer proposed a Turko-Tatar etymology,¹⁰⁹ what has not been proven.¹¹⁰

Rynchines. The etymology of their name is not convincingly explained. They appear in 614 in the context of the siege of Thessalonica. In 675-677 under the rule of King Perbuondos). They were neighbours of the Sagudates and the Strymonians. They sat near the Chalkidiki Peninsula and Athos. At the end of the eighth or beginning of the ninth century, they were Christianized during the reign of the iconoclast emperors by the monks of Athos.¹¹¹

Strymonians (Strumincy). Located further east of the Rynchines,¹¹² on the middle and lower Strymon river. Mentioned in the *Miracula S. Demetrii* and by Kaminiates. Constantine Porphyrogenitus reports that the Scythians (*i.e.* Slavs) lived in the Strymon theme in the place of the Macedonians, and since the time when Emperor Justinian II replaced them in the Strymon Mountains.¹¹³

Smoljane. They bordered with the Strymonians somewhere in the Rhodopes. They are not mentioned by the *Miraculi of S. Demetrii*, but they are mentioned in an inscription from Philippi, according to which they were the target of an attack by the Bulgarian archon Persian in 837.¹¹⁴ In the 10th-12th centuries, among the suffragans of the metropolis of Philippi, there is the bishopric of Smolenon. The Smolians occupied the entire mountainous valley of the Msta, including the coastal lowland, and reached the Rhodope

¹⁰⁷ W. Swoboda, *Sagudaci*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 5, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1975, p. 18.

¹⁰⁸ Niederle, *SlovStar*. II, 2, p. 425, based on κομπολὶν Σαγουδάου near Nicomedia by Anna Komnena, *Alex.* XV 2.

¹⁰⁹ Vasmer, *SG*, p. 177.

¹¹⁰ F. Sławski, *Sagudaci*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 5, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1975, p. 18 considers it unclear. Contrary to this author, the toponym of Sagudai in the thirteenth century is not attested.

¹¹¹ Niederle, *SlovStar*. II, 2, pp. 425-427; Vasmer, *SG*, p. 177; W. Swoboda, *Rynchinowie*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 4, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1970, pp. 629-630.

¹¹² Vasmer, *SG*, p. 177.

¹¹³ CP, *De thematibus*, c. II 3.

¹¹⁴ V. Beševliev, *Die protobulgarischen Inschriften*, Berlin 1963, No. 14, pp. 164-165. In the text of the inscription is the archon, not “Khagan”, as the relevant translation in TNDS inaccurately conveys.

Mountains, where they settled in the valley of the upper Arda. On the basis of the territorial extent of the Smolenon thema, it is possible to come to a conclusion about the large size of the Smolian tribal territory.¹¹⁵

Verzites/Berziti. They are usually located in Macedonia. L. Niederle placed them above the middle Vardar.¹¹⁶ I do not see the possibility of identifying them with the Slavic land of Velzetia mentioned by Theophanes and the tribe of Velegezites.¹¹⁷ However, a more accurate location remains an open question.¹¹⁸ Mentioned as one of the tribes besieging Thessalonica in 614 (Mir. II 1, 179). From the sources of the Middle Byzantine period, they mention the Verzites of Kedrenos¹¹⁹ and Leon Grammatikos.¹²⁰ C. de Boor cites the information of the archon of the Verzites.¹²¹

THESSALY

Velegezites. This tribe lived in southern Thessaly, in the vicinity of Demetrias and of Phthiotic Tebes, near the gulf of Volos.¹²² It was first mentioned at the siege of Thessalonica in 614 (Mir. II 1, 179). The province of Velezitia is mentioned in sources from the 12th-13th centuries.¹²³

EPIRUS

Vayunites. First mentioned at the siege of Thessalonica in 614 (Mir. II 1, 179). Most likely, however, they eventually settled not in Macedonia, but in Epirus. They are identified with the Slavic inhabitants of the land of Vagenetia, Vagnetia, Bagenetia, located between Ioannina and Glavnici in the southern part of Epirus.¹²⁴ There are suggestions that they retained the last vestiges of independence until the thirteenth century.¹²⁵

¹¹⁵ W. Swoboda, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 5, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1975, pp. 319-320.

¹¹⁶ Kurnatowska, SP, p. 43.

¹¹⁷ Theoph. AM 6265 (= 772/3). The attack of the Bulgarian army on Berzitia in October 773, with orders to resettle the inhabitants to Bulgaria, excludes its location in Thessaly, despite Vasmer, SG, pp. 85-86.

¹¹⁸ W. Swoboda, TNDS 1, p. 222, n. 22; P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciennes recueils...*, vol. 2, p. 90.

¹¹⁹ Kedrenos, II 17.

¹²⁰ Leo Gramm., ed. Bonn, p. 188.

¹²¹ In his edition of Theophanes, 1, p. 473.

¹²² Niederle, *SlovStar*. II, 2, p. 439; W. Swoboda, *Welegezyci*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 6, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1977, pp. 357-358; P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciennes recueils...*, vol. 2, p. 90.

¹²³ Niederle, *SlovStar*. II 2, p. 439.

¹²⁴ Ibidem, p. 437-438. However, the linguistic connection between the two names is not entirely clear, W. Swoboda, *Wajunici, Welegezyci*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 6, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1977, pp. 296-297.

¹²⁵ W. Swoboda, *Wajunici...*, p. 297.

PELOPONNESE

Of the Slavic tribes settled in the Peloponnese, the names of only two, the **Milingi** and the **Ezerites** (Μιληγγοί, Ἐζερίται), have been indisputably preserved. Although no one disputes their Slavicness, which is unequivocally confirmed by Byzantine, French and Venetian sources, their names are a subject of controversy, as some scholars derive them from Greek.¹²⁶ They dwelt in the vicinity of the cities of Lacedaemon and Helos on the Gulf of Lacon, in the mountains of Taygetus; Milingi on the eastern slopes,¹²⁷ and on the western, the Ezerites.¹²⁸ According to Henrik Birnbaum, the settlement area of the Milingi seems to coincide exactly with the area of the Peloponnesian district of Mani.¹²⁹ Both tribes were warlike, often throwing off the Byzantine yoke. The Milingi are directly attested as early as the thirteenth century (see above), but it is possible that the references to the southern Peloponnesian barbarians in the fifteenth century refer to them.¹³⁰

Mainotes. According to Constantine, the Porphyrogenites in the ninth century were Romans retaining the old faith of the Hellenes (that is, in the language of that epoch, the pagans). They may have been ethnic Greeks. After the conquest in the ninth century, they were baptized. They occupied the southern slopes of Taygetus from Cape Matapan toward Gythion and Maina. Over time, they succumbed to strong Slavization.¹³¹

Tsakones. They occupied the very mountainous southeastern Peloponnese north of Monemvasia, between Pärnon and the Argolitic Lagoon. They were descendants of Greek farmers and shepherds,¹³² who fled there from the Slavic deluge of the end of the sixth century. The dispute is whether they later succumbed to partial Slavization,¹³³ or whether

126 Especially D.J. Georgacas, *The Medieval names Melingi and Ezeritae of Slavic Groups in the Peloponnesus*, "Byzantinische Zeitschrift" 43 (1950), pp. 301-333; idem, *Place and other Names in Greece of Various Balkan Origins. Part I*, "Zeitschrift für Balkanologie" 2 (1964), pp. 38-76, esp. pp. 46-50, 72-73, 76 (in a fierce polemic against H. Grégoire, G. Ostrogorski, P. Skok and others). Contra: H. Birnbaum, *Noch einmal...*, pp. 15-26. In his opinion, the tribe Milingi probably brought its name to the Peloponnese from its ancestral homeland.

127 G. Labuda, *Milingowie*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 3, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1967, p. 259; W. Swoboda, *TNDS* 3, p. 477 n. 85.

128 Ph. Malingoudis, *Σλαβοι στη μεσαιωνική Ελλάδα*, Thessaloniki 2013, p. 123.

129 H. Birnbaum, *Noch einmal...*, pp. 17-18.

130 Ibidem, p. 17.

131 A. Bon, *Le Peloponnèse byzantin jusqu'en 1204*, Paris 1951, pp. 71-74; *TNDS* 3, p. 477 notes 91-92.

132 CM, p. 16. Beyond this chronicle, CP De caerimoniis, II 45, vol. 1, p. 665. S.P. Kyriakides, *Οἱ Σκλάβοι ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ*, Thessaloniki 1947, pp. 60-61, considers the phrase CM referring to the displacement of the Greek population to be a fabrication of the author of the chronicle.

133 Niederle, *SlovStar*. II 2, p. 440.

they fully preserved their Greek ethnicity, as stated by Greek scholars in particular.¹³⁴

UNDEFINED TERRITORY

ΕΒΙΑΙΤ or **ΑΙΒΙΑΙΤ**. A new tribal name, appearing on two seals of two imperial spatharii, whose fragmentary names have not been reconstructed by the editor. The older seal dates from the second half of the eighth century, and the younger from the first half of the ninth century. Werner Seibt believes that the name may be Slavic and suggests a connection with the Slavic verb “videti”. The younger seal comes from Athens.¹³⁵

CENTRAL GREECE?

Wychite/Wychiti (Hellas). A mysterious Slavic tribe from central Greece (tema Hellas). Attested on several seals from the 9th-10th centuries.¹³⁶

However, there must have been many more Slavic tribes settled in Greece. As the toponomastic data show, the Peloponnese in particular was strongly Slavized, but apart from it and Macedonia, also Thessaly, Boeotia, Attica and Epirus and some islands. Even if some of the Slavic toponyms arose as a result of the so-called secondary, or later, internal colonization, their number shows that the Slavs came to Greece in large numbers, as Max Vasmer has already established. If many tribal names have not been preserved, it is also because the Byzantines most often called the territories controlled by the Slavs “Sclavinia”. At first, it was the name given to the territories occupied by the Slavs, and later, from the end of the 8th century, also to the Slavic territories in the Roman Empire politically dependent on Constantinople. Peter Charanis counted 8 mentions in Greek sources up to the 7th, 8th and early 9th centuries in which the term “Sclavinia” appears.¹³⁷ The term refers to the territories in Thrace and ancient Macedonia. In relation to the lands in the Peloponnese, it is not used by any Greek source,¹³⁸ but it is quoted in the Latin *Vita S. Willibaldi*: “ad urbem Manamfasiam, in Slawinia terrae”.¹³⁹

¹³⁴ The earlier state of the discussion (up to 1995) is reported in: W. Swoboda, *TNDS* 3, pp. 484-485, note 3.

¹³⁵ W. Seibt, *Siegel als Quelle...*, pp. 29-30.

¹³⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 33-35.

¹³⁷ P. Charanis, *Observations...*, p. 11.

¹³⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 13.

¹³⁹ *MGH SS*, XV/1, p. 93. The understanding of the term “Slawinia terrae” in this text has now been the subject of an intense debate, caused by a dispute over the interpretation of the phrase κατὰ τῆς Σκλαυηνίας πληθος in Theophylact Simokatta (*Hist.* VIII 5, 10). The question is whether Σκλαυηνία should be understood here as a noun or an adjective (then it does not mean Slavic territory). The latter meaning was advocated by E. Chrysos, *Settlements of Slavs and Byzantine Sovereignty in the Balkans*, in: *Byzantina Mediterranea. Festschrift für Johannes Koder zum 65.*

Politically subordinated to the Byzantium "Sklavinias" had to provide military assistance to the emperor, pay tribute and perform other servitudes. From the eighth century onwards, the seals of the archons of the Slavs nominated by emperors appear. Several of them were first announced in 1999 by Werner Seibt. If the sphragistic dating is correct, the seal of Tichomir, the imperial spatharius and archon of the Velegezites refers to the first half of the eighth century.¹⁴⁰ The seal of the two archons (theme?) Hellas, Peter hypatos and Dargaskavos (Dragoslav?) is dated to about the same period. The latter may be a Slav.¹⁴¹ Michael, the imperial spatharius and archon of Kerminica (last third of the tenth century) is known.¹⁴² The Greek place name Gremménitsa/Gramménitsa is to be found in the northern Peloponnese¹⁴³. From the end of the ninth century there is a known seal of the archon of Wagentia (Vayunites), in the rank of imperial protospatharius.¹⁴⁴ From the first half of the eleventh century the archon of Drugovitia, Peter Moschos is known.¹⁴⁵ From 1062 comes a document attesting to the archon of Sklavoarchontia, Michael with the nickname Karseris (from the region of Serres).¹⁴⁶ There are numerous seals of the archons of cities and numerous small regions of Greece.¹⁴⁷ So far,

Geburtstag, ed. K. Belke et alii, Wien 2007, p. 130, provoking opposition from F. Curta, *Sklaviniai and Ethnic Adjectives: A Clarification*, "Byzantion. Nea Hellás" 30 (2011), pp. 85-98, advocating a noun understanding of the word Σκλαυηνία here. The position of Chrysos was strengthened by A. Gkoutzioukostas, *The Term „Σκλαυηνία” and the Use of Adjectives which Derive from Ethnic names in the History of Theophylact Simocatta*, in: *International Scientific Conference, Cyril and Methodius: Byzantium and the World of the Slavs*, ed. A. Delikari, Thessaloniki 2015, pp. 639-646 trying to prove that also in Vita S. Willibaldi the expression "Slawinia" has an adjectival meaning, which was met with F. Curta's rejoinder, *Theophylact Simocatta Revisited. A Response to Andreas Gkoutzioukostas*, "Byzantion. Nea Hellás" 35 (2016), pp. 195-209 and S. Stojkov's, „Sklavinija” kaj Teofilakt Simokata, "Istorija" 63 (2018), pp. 15-40. The Term Sclavinia in Byzantine Sources, pp. 413-433. Their arguments have once again been answered at length by A. Gkoutzioukostas, "Sklavenia" („ΣΚΛΑΥΗΝΙΑ”) *Revisited: Previous and Recent Considerations*, "ΠΙΑΕΚΒΟΛΑΙ. An Electronic Journal for Byzantine Literature" 7 (2017), pp. 1-12. F. Curta's reaction again, *Sklavinia in Theophylact Simocatta (Hopefully) for the Last Time*, "Porphyra" 27 (2018), pp. 5-15, see also M.B. Panov, *Slavs...*, p. 63. Well, leaving aside the question of the understanding of κατὰ τῆς Σκλαυηνίας πλῆθος in Theophylactus, which is more complex, in the case of the phrase "in Slawinia terrae" there is no doubt that it must be a *Slavic territory*, regardless of whether we are dealing here with a noun or an adjective.

¹⁴⁰ W. Seibt, *Siegel als Quelle...*, p. 28.

¹⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 20 and n. 7-8.

¹⁴² Ibidem, pp. 30-31.

¹⁴³ Vasmer, SG, p. 57.

¹⁴⁴ W. Seibt, *Siegel als Quelle...*, p. 31.

¹⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 35.

¹⁴⁶ B. Krsmanović, *Podatak o slovenskoj arhontij iz XI veka*, "Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta" 34 (1995), pp. 69-77 (also treats of other archons of this period in northern Greece).

¹⁴⁷ W. Seibt, *Siegel als Quelle...*, pp. 31 ff.

apart from Nebulos (Asia Minor), the archons of the Slavs, rarely bearing Slavic names, date back to the period of the 8th-11th centuries. Either this is due to the fact that they bore Christian names, or some of the archons were imposed by the emperor, from a foreign environment.

SLAVIC SOCIETY

Political institutions. Procopius of Caesarea informs us that the Sclaveni and the Antes do not know monarchy, but have long lived in democracy (δημοκρατία), and therefore consider together all favorable and unfavorable affairs. And he adds that, "in all other matters ... these two barbarian peoples have had from ancient times the same institutions and customs".¹⁴⁸ Procopius was a classicizing historian¹⁴⁹ and willingly used literary archaization, but his remarks suggest neither anarchy nor the lack of any social order among the Slavs.¹⁵⁰ They only suggest that matters of great importance were considered and decided at the general assembly, called among the Slavs, as it is known from

¹⁴⁸ Proc. Bella, VII 14, 1, 22-23. Also Pseudo-Maurice (Strateg. XII 5) informs that the Slavic tribes do not differ either in customs or lifestyle, which is confirmed by research on their material culture, Kurnatowska, SP, pp. 62 ff.

¹⁴⁹ A. Ziebuhr, *Die Exkurse im Geschichtswerk des Prokopios von Kaisareia. Literarische Tradition und spätantike Gegenwart in klassizistischer Historiographie*, Stuttgart 2024, p. 244: Procopius "bietet eine Ethnographie der Anten und Sklavenier, die als typische Barbarenethnographie ebenfalls ein stark herodoteisches Kolorit aufweist". It should be emphasized that for most researchers Procopius, however, only adopted the scheme of describing the barbarians of classical Greek ethnography. The content of the his description was updated. This position was questioned by the G. Kardaras, *A Re-approach of Procopius' ethnographic account on the Early Slavs*, "Byzantina Symmeikta" 27 (2017), pp. 239-257. According to him, Procopius mainly "followed the literary tradition" (p. 256). However, his argumentation is unconvincing.

¹⁵⁰ R. Benedicty, *Prokopios' Berichte über slavische Vorzeit. Beiträge zur historiographischen Methode des Prokopios von Kaisareia*, "Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft" 14 (1965), pp. 54-55 takes into account the contemporary meaning of the term δημοκρατία in Byzantium and argues that, according to the Greek author, the Slavs lived in complete lawlessness and anarchy. At the same time, Benedicty suggests that this opinion refers to the topos of depicting northern barbarians, present since the times of Hippocrates and Aristotle. Also E. Mühle, *Śłowianie...*, p. 57 interprets Procopius's ἐν δημοκρατία as a Slavic "community... living without a particular order." However, Procopius' characterization of the Sclaveni and Antes, although brief, is quite comprehensive and autopsy. I don't see in it a description of the elements of anarchy. Slavic soldiers during the Gothic War were rather disciplined and elsewhere, fighting for or against the Romans also. For Procopius, the participation of "almost all the Antes" in the assembly was rather associated with ancient democracy, TNDS, p. 86, note 23. Łowmiański, PP, 4, p. 84 is of the opinion that the case with Pseudo-Chilbiudius was about a small-tribal assembly, which, despite Kurnatowska's approval, SP, pp. 82-83, cannot be verified. Procopius did not assign the Slaveni and Antes to the Huns, as W. Pohl states, *Ethnische Identitäten in Südosteuropa als Forschungsproblem*, in: Jakob Philipp Fallmerayer (1790-1861). *Der Gelehrte und seine Aktualität im 21. Jahrhundert. Konferenz der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Kommission für interdisziplinäre Südosteuropaforschung der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu*

later sources, *vec* (a meeting).¹⁵¹ It is worth emphasizing that Procopius gave the “community rule” among the Slavs the feature of universality, the feature of a political system. From the text of Pseudo-Caesarius, it can be concluded that the Slavs are socially independent (αὐτόνομοι) and lack him respect for the central authority (they often kill their leaders-hegemony and archons-during feasts or travels).¹⁵² A Byzantine author writing around 539? states the fact of anarchy (the murder of princes), but it is possible to draw a more extensive conclusion, namely that the power of the individual is still weak and the sense of community power is still strong among some Slavic tribes. The indiscipline, chaos and lack of central authority among the Slavs is mentioned by the well-informed Pseudo-Maurice. At the same time, in the same place, he notices their great numbers,¹⁵³ which undoubtedly must have made it difficult to create such a power. Elsewhere he describes the sessions of the rally (without naming it): “If there are different views among them, they either do not come to an agreement at all, or, if some agree, others immediately violate [their] decisions; for all are hostile to one another, and no one is willing to yield to another”.¹⁵⁴ Elsewhere he sees that the Slavs have numerous kings who must be pitted against each other through gifts and treaties.¹⁵⁵ It is difficult not to see a contradiction in it, which can only be explained by the fact that either there were tribes of Sclaveni and Antes, which had no rulers at all, and everything was decided by the assembly, or that some tribes were decided by the assembly and kings.

Perhaps the last, but very vague, Byzantine hint of a Slavic rally is provided by Menander the Protector in reference to the Antes. The Antes decided to send an embassy to the Avars¹⁵⁶ and they decided to send as an envoy Mezamir, a man of the greatest importance in the whole tribe.¹⁵⁷

Göttingen (München, 6. Juni 2011), ed. C. Märkl, P. Schreiner, München 2013, p. 150. Procopius only compared the life and some customs of the Slavs with those of the Huns.

¹⁵¹ Basic information about the institutional meetings among the Slavs, S. Russocki, *Wiec*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 6, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1977, pp. 424-428.

¹⁵² Pseudo-Caesarius, *Dialogues*, II 110; R. Riedinger, *Pseudo-Kaisarios. Überlieferungsgeschichte und Verfasserfrage*, München 1969, p. 302. Polish translation: TNDS 2, p. 46.

¹⁵³ Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strateg.* IX 3, 1.

¹⁵⁴ Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strateg.* IX 4, 30. Polish translation after TNDS 1, p. 145, see W. Swoboda's commentary, *ibidem*, p. 154, note 21.

¹⁵⁵ Pseudo-Maurikios, *Strateg.* XI 4, 30.

¹⁵⁶ It refers to the period before the arrival of the Avars in the Pannonian Basin, which dates back to 558/559 at the earliest, Łowmiański, *PP*, 2, p. 344. As for Medzamir, see TNDS 1, p. 128 n. 2. A. Sarantis, *Justinian's Balkan Wars. Campaigning, Diplomacy and Development in Illyricum, Thrace and The Northern World A. D. 527-65*, Prenton 2016, p. 249 locates the seats of the attacked Antes near Turris, on the lower Danube, and their defeats for the years „ca. 557-62”.

¹⁵⁷ Menandros, *EL*, ed. de Boor, p. 443, lines 12-15. R. Benedicty, *Prokopios' Berichte...*, pp. 63-64, on the basis of some Greek expressions used in the text, argues for the decision of the assembly. On the contrary, Łowmiański, *PP*, 4, p. 85, who believes that Menander

A certain difficulty in describing the political system of Slavic societies, initially unaware of by Byzantine authors (this was also the case with the Celts, Germans, Turks), lay in the fact that they were dealing not with one people, but with a large Indo-European language group.

Kings and elders. Jordanes, in his account of the battles of the Venethi and Antes against the Goths in the fourth century, mentions the king (*rex*) of the Antes Booz, crucified with his sons and seventy *primates* by the victorious enemy (Iord. Get. 247). The Sclaveni hegemon and archons are mentioned in ca. 539 by Pseudo-Caesarius.¹⁵⁸ Menander the Protector mentions c. 557-562 οἱ ἄρχοντες of Antes and one of them, Medzamir, by name. Idarizios and Kelagast also belonged to the ducal family. The Byzantine informant also revealed that the safety of the Antes depended on the qualifications of such archons. According to him, one of the Khagan's men advised the execution of Mezamir, who had been an envoy to the Avars: „This man has gained the greatest importance among the Antes and is capable of facing his enemies in any case. So it is necessary to kill it so that in the future it will be able to invade foreign land without difficulty”.¹⁵⁹ This text shows that talented princes were the guarantor of tribal existence. The Greek *hegemones* seem to correspond terminologically to *primates* in Latin, as shown by another passage from Menander, in which Dauritas responds to the request of the Avar Khagan. His position has not been specified in detail, but there is no reason to claim that he was only a voivode.¹⁶⁰ The most common term for Slavic rulers from the 4th-7th centuries is ῥῆξ/*rex*, and Pseudo-Maurikios argues that the Slavs have many kings who must be pitted against each other in order to achieve Roman military and political goals.¹⁶¹ This same terminology Byzantine authors applied to Germanic and Hun kings. Therefore, the position of the Slavic kings must have been similar for them. It is therefore difficult to see an ordinary tribal prince under the Greek (Latin) term ῥῆξ. For such a ruler, the Byzantines had the term *ethnarchos*,¹⁶² or

is silent about the people's assembly and attributed the initiative to sending Mezamir to the Antian archons. In any case, according to the text, the message to the Avars was sent by the „Antes” and not by the „archons of the Antes”, as Łowmiański wanted. Pseudo-Caesarius, *Dialogues*, II 110.

¹⁵⁸ Pseudo-Caesarius, *Dialogues*, II 110.

¹⁵⁹ TNDS 2, p. 119.

¹⁶⁰ So N. Županić, *Staroslovenski vojvoda Dauritas i obarski kagan Bajan*, „Istoriski Časopis” 5 (1954/1955), pp. 117-128.

¹⁶¹ Appropriate passages in the sources were compiled by R. Benedicty, *Prokopios' Berichte...*, p. 66.

¹⁶² Kotłowska-Różycki, Teofilakt, VI 2, 12. The information refers to the Baltic Slavs. Kotłowska-Różycki find in this passage a trace of the functioning of the people's assembly, Teofilakt, p. 285, note 704. The interpretation would be interesting because his circle would be limited to the warriors themselves. However, the authors omit Theophanes, AM 6083 [year 590/591], who, as in many other places where his information coincides with Theophylactus, used some common source, has additional

phylarchos.¹⁶³ Dauritos's power must have transcended a single tribe, or he and his hegemons would not have been able to say to the Avars: "Who is the man who came into the world and warms himself in the sunshine, and who wants to subdue our power? For we are accustomed to rule over other people's lands, and not to let others rule over our lands. We are sure of this as long as there are

information about this episode, namely that the return message to the Avar Khagan was sent not by the ethnarchs, but by the taxiarchs (there is no possibility that this same Greek military term could be translated differently than voivodes). This date must have been already in the protocol of the interrogation of the Slavs by Emperor Maurice. Theophylact could describe the council of taxiarchs and ethnarchs as a "assembly of warriors". I do not share the position denying the value of all information about the Baltic Slavs presented by P. Barford, *The Early Slavs...*, pp. 59-60; M. Wołoszyn, *Theophylaktos Simokates und die Slawen am Ende des westlichen Ozeans-die erste Erwähnung der Ostseeslawen?*, Kraków 2014, and F. Curta, *Slavs in the Making: History, Linguistic and Archaeology in Eastern Europe (ca. 500-ca. 700)*, London 2021, p. 56 (according to him, the three Sclaveni captured by imperial guard had nothing to do with either East Central Europe or the Baltic Sea). This position is unconvincingly justified, J. Prostko-Prostyński, „Ziemia ich nie zna żelaza”. *Glosa do Historiae VI 2 Teofylakta Simokatty*, in: *Viator per devia scientiae itinera*, ed. A. Michałowski, M. Teska, M. Żółkiewski, Poznań 2015, pp. 321-326. F. Curta, *Slavs in the Making...*, p. 55 note 72, criticizes me for not treating the mention of iron deficiency in the country of "three Sclaveni" as a "trope" and not for being "troubled" by the fact that there is an evident contradiction in the Theophylact account; on the one hand, the country of these Slavs is "ignorant of iron", and on the other hand, the khagan of Avars asks them for military help. If Curta had read my article more carefully, he would have found it explained. The expression, that land of these Slavs "ignores iron" should be interpreted literally, which means that it does not produce it, which corresponds well to early medieval Pomerania in Poland (where not at that time traces of iron production). But this does not mean that those Slavs there were not armed at all, or did not know weapons, including iron weapons; at this point, the explanations of the "three Sclaveni" were probably untrue. The Slavs, who found themselves in a forced situation, probably wanted to emphasize the peaceful intentions of their people towards the Empire. However, the metal for the production of weapons could have come from neighboring areas. I also pointed out that in the Baltic region the population also used wooden weapons for a long time in the Middle Ages. Such a historical delay can be explained by the high price of iron weapons. It was learned that iron was to be obtained and smelted in Anatolia in the third millennium B.C., from about 1800 B.C. it began to be used to produce weapons, Ü. Yalçın, *Zum Eisen der Hethiter*, https://www.tf.uni-kiel.de/eisen_hethiter_yalcin, pp. 493-502, but as late as about 1100 the lance with the iron tip was considered the king's weapon in Assyria, A. Alföldi, *Die Struktur der voretruskischen Römerstaates*, Heidelberg 1974, p. 211. It is a well-known fact from Herodotus' work that both the Persian army of King Xerxes and the Greeks fighting against it in the fifth century B.C. had mainly weapons made of bronze. Tacitus, *Ger.* 6.1 attests to the small proportion of iron weapons among the Germans in his time, and S. Hartung, *Kontinuitäten und Brüche in den römisch-markomannischen Beziehungen während der Kaiserzeit. Politik, Wirtschaft, Kultur und Alltag neben einer antiken Supermacht*, Stuttgart 2024, p. 295, believes that barbarian weapons in the era of the Marcomannic Wars were mostly made of wood. Curta's assumption that "Pomerania is nowhere near the Western Ocean" (F. Curta, *Slavs in Making...*, p. 55, footnote 72] because the Western Ocean should be identified only with the Atlantic (M. Wołoszyn, *Theophylaktos...*, pp. 60-61) is unproven and erroneous, as shown again by J. Koder, *Slawische Musikanten von Ende des westlichen Ozeans*, "Zbornik Radova Vizantološkog Instituta" 55 (2018), pp. 19-28, who advocates the Baltic Sea and Pomerania, although for reasons unknown to me he takes into account a large area of the Baltic Sea shore from Tallinn to the Gulf of Gdańsk (p. 23). This area was already occupied by the Finnish and Baltic tribes at that time.

163 Theoph. Sim., VII 4. 13. Mentioned here is Peiragastos.

wars and swords.” We have before us an underestimated document and manifesto of Slavic expansion, containing the conviction of its own superiority over all earthly powers. That could not be said by a subordinate tribal chief. Chatzon, who commanded the Slavic siege of Thessalonica in the seventh century, was an “exarch”,¹⁶⁴ so probably *voivoda* of several tribes for the duration of the war.¹⁶⁵ On the other hand, the king of the “Macedonian” Rynchines and Strymonians (and Sagudates) was Perboundos.¹⁶⁶ Here we have clear evidence of a supra-tribal Slavic kingdom on Byzantine soil. Little is known in the research on the early Slavs is the anonymous king mentioned by Elias of Nisibis, (AH 39 = 656/7 year): “Eo [anno] Constans rex Romanorum regiones Sclavorum ingressus proelium fecit rege eorum et vicit eum et victoria exii.”¹⁶⁷ This text refers to the expedition of Emperor Constans II against Sklavinias (in Thrace or Macedonia) in 656/657.¹⁶⁸

Neither the history of the Danubian nor the “Byzantine” Slavs provide any evidence of how these kings were appointed and whether dynasties were formed.

The existence of Slavic elders (primates, hegemonones) is confirmed. However, it is difficult to distinguish the positions (‘offices’) it holds. J. Nalepa points out that on the basis of toponomastics, the dignity of *zupan* was known to the Slavs in Greece.¹⁶⁹ Ph. Maligoudis recognizes exarch Chatzon as *voivode*.¹⁷⁰ It should be noted that *voivodes* could hide under the *taxiarchs* mentioned by Theophanes among the Baltic Slavs.¹⁷¹ Theophylact mentions *taxiarchs* also among the Danubian Slavs.¹⁷² This conclusion is not

¹⁶⁴ Mir. II 1, 193. On the position of Chatzon in relation to the Avar Kaghan, see very interesting remarks of F. Curta, *The Long Sixth Century in Eastern Europe*, Leiden 2021, p. 289 footnote 88.

¹⁶⁵ This hypothesis seems to me to be the most probable.

¹⁶⁶ Mir. S. Demetrii, II 4, 231, 235, 238. Ibidem, II 4, 255, ῥήγες of Drugovites. TNDS 1, 191, 193, p. 199 translates consistently but inaccurately ῥήξ, ῥήγες, as “prince,” “princes.”

¹⁶⁷ Eliae metropolitae Nisibeni opus chronologicum, pars prior, 68.

¹⁶⁸ Theoph. AM 6149. The name of the Slavic territory? is given here in an obvious way in the singularis „Sklavinia” (κατὰ Σκλαυνίας), so it is difficult to understand why P. Lemerle, *Les plus anciennes recueils...*, vol. 2, p. 186; TNDS 3, p. 52, and many others, translate: “against the Sklaviniai.” Svoboda, TNDS 3, p. 90 n. 27 considers the year 658 to be the correct date of the expedition.

¹⁶⁹ J. Nalepa, *O pierwotnych siedzibach Słowian w świetle nowszych badań archeologicznych, lingwistycznych i historycznych*, part 2, “Slavia Antiqua” 50 (2009), p. 153.

¹⁷⁰ Ph. Maligoudis, *Zur Wehrverfassung der slavischen Stämme in 7. Jahrhundert*, “Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik” 44 (1994), p. 280. His Germanic etymology of the name Χάτζοβος (gen. sing.) is unconvincing (pp. 280-281). Maligoudis did not know about the existence of the Slavic personal name *Chocian*, which is present in Poland even to this day, eg. name a known personage: Dr Chocian.

¹⁷¹ Theoph. AM 6083.

¹⁷² Theoph. Sim. VI 4, 5. His terminology is not “shaky” or “clumsy”, as Łowmiański thinks, PP, 3, p. 474 n. 1447, which they rightly oppose Kotłowska-Różycki, Teofilakt, p. 36 n. 17.

weakened by taking into account the Greek terms referring to the military hierarchy of the Romans. The commander-in-chief here is always the strategos, (magister militum) stratelates, sometimes the hypostrategos, but also the taxiarch. Taxiarch, a term that is the Greek equivalent of the Latin dignity *dux*,¹⁷³ could be a commander acting alone in a designated theater of war and commanding several thousand soldiers. Hence, it cannot be ruled out that the Greek author referred to the Slavic voivodes in this way. Nevertheless, the term voivode itself must have been known to the Slavs from ancient times, since it was brought by them to Greece, as the toponymy shows.¹⁷⁴

Procopius characterized Slavic combat tactics as infantry warfare that had no armor, but only small shields and javelins.¹⁷⁵ However, elsewhere he writes about the arrival at the Italian front of Byzantine mounted reinforcements consisting mainly of Sclavens, Antes and Huns, which means that both groups of Slavs used mounted warriors on a massive scale.¹⁷⁶ The Slavs produced their weapons themselves, and besides, they were massively supplied with captured Roman weapons. From Daurentius' speech to the Avar envoys, we can infer that at least some of them had swords.¹⁷⁷ From the text of *Miracula S. Demetrii*, it appears that they also used bows, slingshots, assault ladders, and siege engines. Wagons were used to transport materiel for warfare. The Slavs excelled at crossing water obstacles. They built one-tree boats (*monoxyla*), which they combined if necessary into a kind of raft (or catamaran?). They used deception and took advantage of the excellent terrain conditions to fight. As early as the 6th century, they conquered numerous Roman cities and fortresses and were able to defeat the Roman army at Adrianople on the open field. John of Ephesus noted that the people, who had previously been equipped with two or three javelins, had already in the eighties of the sixth century "learned to fight better than the Romans." Already during their stay on the Danube, the Slavs developed strategic planning, as we can see from the consistent plan to capture Thessalonica in the middle of the sixth century and

173 This has been proved, beyond doubt, by Stein, HBE, pp. 814 (excursus M: Le Tzane Théodore était-il tribun ou duc?).

174 Vasmer, SG, p. 87, s.v. *Βοιβόδα* (Aiginion, Trikkala in Thessaly). Vasmer explains this name as "Wojewodenort". Then there is *Voivóda*, a mountain in Hestiaiotis. The Bulgarian place names of *Vojvoda*, *Vojvodovo*, Vasmer, SG, l.c. Also *Βοιβόντα* in Arcadia (Peloponnese), in the Megalopolis region, is the name of the voivode's place of residence according to Vasmer, SG, p. 151, s.v.

175 Proc. Bella, VII 14, 25-26.

176 M. Kazanski, *L'armement slave du haut Moyen-Age (Ve-VIIe siècles). A propos des chefs militaires et des guerriers professionnels chez les ancien Slaves*, "Přehled výzkumů" 39 (1999), pp. 197-236; idem, *La cavalerie slave à l'époque de Justinien*, "Archaeologia Baltica" 11 (2009), pp. 229-239.

177 Menand. frg. 21 in: ELR 1, p. 15, lines 42-43. According to Kurnatowska, SP, p. 75, this evidenced that at least the Slavic elders had swords.

then in 614. It is possible that as early as the sixth century we are dealing with the development of a “professional” warriors among them, i.e. a social group superior to the rest of the commoners.

A glimpse into social relations. The value of toponomastics for the study of the medieval social history of the Slavs in Greece has long been underestimated, despite the fact that there is an almost complete lack of literary sources for this matter, which is understandable because historians and authors of hagiographic works in Constantinople had little interest in the remote and only partially controlled provinces. Meanwhile, it is evident that some of the Slavic place names petrified in Greek show linguistic features from before the Slavic vowel shift of the mid-ninth century and are suitable for use in such studies. Linguists note that the process of Hellenization of the Slavic nomenclature began in the south, in the Peloponnese, and from there gradually progressed northwards. The further north one goes, the rarer are the place names formed from anthroponyms. In the Peloponnese, in the western part of Taygetus, in the territories settled before the ninth century by the Slavic tribe of the Milingi, names formed from personal names have been preserved in microtoponymy: e.g. from *Nemir*, *Ljubovid*, *Ljutimir*, *Tolimer*, *Vitomir*, etc., while in the area of Epirus there are almost no such naming formations.¹⁷⁸ Several interesting place names seem to shed light on the social aspects of Slavic life in the Peloponnese in the Middle Ages.

Πολοβίτσα (*Polowica*). A village in Laconia, south of Sparta.¹⁷⁹ The Slavic etymology of the name, from *polъ* (*polowa*, *polowica*, *polovitsa*, half) is unmistakable. Ph. Maligoudis derives the semantics of this name from Byzantine agrarian law, according to which a peasant who was unable to cultivate his entire acreage of land could formally transfer half of his land to another user in the form of a “semi-tenancy” (ἡμισεία). According to the Greek scholar, the name *Πολοβίτσα* shows the adoption by the Slavs of Byzantine legal practices used by the local population.¹⁸⁰ However, it cannot be ruled out that *the half-cut* (*polovitsa*) may also indicate a purely Slavic practice of inheritance, in which one of the heirs received half of the share!

The microtoponym *Σεμπροβίτσα* (*Sębrowica*) - the commune of Βυτίνα in Arcadia is puzzling.¹⁸¹ The word is unmistakably Slavic. The suffix -ov-

178 Ph. Maligoudis, *Zur frühslavischen Sozialgeschichte im Spiegel der Toponymie*, “Études Balkaniques” 21/1 (1985), p. 89.

179 Vasmer, SG, p. 172. The village is not isolated, but the region has more Slavic nomenclature.

180 Ph. Maligoudis, *Zur frühslavischen Sozialgeschichte...*, p. 89, idem, *Σλαβοί στη μεσαιωνική Ελλάδα...*, pp. 195-196.

181 D. Moutsos, *Greek σέμπρος and Slavic sębrъ*, “Indogermanische Forschungen” 88 (1983), pp. 165-179. The word σέμπρος is attested in modern, nineteenth-century Greek in the Peloponnese (near Patras).

ica and the root (protoslav.) **sebrъ*, a term that the Slavs passed on to other Balkan peoples (Greeks, Albanians, Romanians), also passed into Modern Greek, denoting a *share farmer* (Latin: *consors, participator*) or a farmer granting a lease on certain terms - "Bauer, der den halben Ertrag, die halbe Abgabe liefert bzw. Empfängt; Halbzinsmann; Halbbauer".¹⁸² Thus, *sebrovica* means "common cultivated land" or "leased land" and at the same time proves that the Slavs settled Arcadia according to their own legal customs.¹⁸³

Μιτάτοβα.¹⁸⁴ Part of the village of Hagia Eirene, now a suburb of Sparta. The early presence of the Slavs in this region is indicated by fibulae with masks of the "Antian type".¹⁸⁵ The name was derived from the Byzantine μιτάτον. It was a technical term for the obligation of the inhabitants of the province to provide for state servants lodgings, or a building in which such lodgings were located. Malingoudis sees in this toponym evidence of Slavs presence in the suburbium of Sparta and their incorporation in the Byzantine system of burdens on the population.¹⁸⁶

Τεργοβίτσα (Tьrgovica). A microtoponym in the municipality of Ζάβιτσα (Żabica) in Acarnania,¹⁸⁷ surrounded by other Slavic microtoponyms.¹⁸⁸ It testifies to the existence of local, and perhaps even more distant, trade among the Slavic villages.¹⁸⁹

SLAVS IN THE SERVICE OF BYZANTIUM

A small group of Slavs made a career in the Byzantine service, reaching important positions in the state and church administration. The Slavs, as well as groups of other barbarians before them, were the first to join the army. Already during the reign of Justinian I (527-565), many Slavs served

182 Ph. Malingoudis, *Zur frühslavischen Sozialgeschichte...*, p. 90.

183 D. Moutsos' attempt to derive *sebrъ* from Middle Greek, Greek *σέμπρος* and not from Slavic *sebrъ*..., pp. 165-179, but he himself admitted that in Byzantine Greek it is not attested. His hypothesis was rejected by Ph. Malingoudis, *Zur frühslavischen Sozialgeschichte...*, p. 91 footnote 16; idem, *Σλαβοί*, p. 197 n. 16. The works of J. Bardach, *Studia z ustroju i prawa Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego XIV-XVII wieku*, Warszawa 1970, pp. 133-134; idem, *Siabr*, in: *Słownik Starożytności Słowiańskich*, vol. 6, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1975, pp. 152-154, are not known to Greek researchers.

184 The name is already attested in the chrysobull of Andronicus Palaeologus from 1314/1315, G. Millet, *Inscriptiones byzantines de Mistra (Pl. XIV-XXIII)*, "Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique" 23 (1899), pp. 34, 103.

185 J. Werner, *Slavische Bügelfibeln des Jahrhunderts*, in: *Reinecke Festschrift zum 75. Geburtstag von Paul Reinecke am 25. September 1947*, ed. G. Behrens, J. Werner, Mainz 1950, p. 151.

186 Ph. Malingoudis, *Σλαβοί*..., pp. 197-198.

187 Γ. Παπατρεχάς, Τοπωνυμικά Ξηρομέρου, "Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Σπερσεοελλαδικών Μελετών" 3 (1974), p. 380.

188 Ibidem, pp. 379-380.

189 Ph. Malingoudis, *Σλαβοί*..., pp. 198-199.

in the Roman army, obtaining high ranks in it.¹⁹⁰ Under Maurice (582-602) the Slavs disappeared completely from the army, which is easily explained by the deadly struggle of the empire with this people, who threatened to occupy the European possessions of the state. Of those who in the VII-X centuries reached high positions in the army,¹⁹¹ can be mentioned the commander of the Slavic contingent in the army of Justinian II, who together with 20,000 soldiers went over to the side of the Arabs,¹⁹² the turmarch Thomas "the Slav" (his Slavic origin was sometimes questioned),¹⁹³ domestikos scholae, patrician and magister Andrew (his Scythian origin allows us to identify him as a Slav, but does not guarantee that he was one!)¹⁹⁴. High civil offices were held by patrician Sisinius Rhentaki(o)s (first quarter of the eighth century),¹⁹⁵ patrician and magister Niketas Rhentakios attested at the beginning of the reign of Romanos I Lekapenos (920-944),¹⁹⁶ paroikomomenos and patrician Damianos, during the reign of Theophilus (829-842),¹⁹⁷ protovestarios and paroikomomenos Rhendakios, probably a eunuch, during the reign of Michael III (842-867)¹⁹⁸. At the court of Emperor Alexander (912-913) we meet the Slav Basilitzes.¹⁹⁹

In the Byzantine church we meet Ardomios (it is supposed to be the Hellenized Slavic name Radomir), a local saint from Thessaly, dated before

190 H. Ditten, *Slawen im byzantinischen Heer von Justinian I. bis Justinian II.*, in: *Studien zum 7. Jahrhundert in Byzanz: Probleme der Herausbildung des Feudalismus*, ed. H. Köpstein, F. Winkelmann, Berlin 1976, pp. 78-84.

191 A simple soldier, but in an important formation of the guard of excubitors, was Ioannikios (ca. 754-846), later a monk with name Saba. He served in the guard of Emperor Constantine VI (780-797), AASS, Novembris II, 1, 332-383. The names of his parents, Myritzikios, and his mother, Anastaso bizantinologe S. Vryonis, *St. Ioannicius the Great (754-846), "Byzantion"* 31 (1961), pp. 245-248, considered to be non-Greek and purely Greek, respectively. However, Ditten showed that the father's name Myritzikios is Slavic *Mirъčo, Mirъko, a shorter form of the name Miroslav, H. Ditten, *Prominente Slawen und Bulgaren in byzantinischen Diensten (Ende des 7. bis Anfang des 10. Jahrhunderts)*, in: *Studien zum 8. und 9. Jahrhundert*, ed. H. Köpstein, F. Winkelmann, Berlin 1983, pp. 102-103, 118 (Korrekturzusatz). Earlier, Ph. Malingoudis, *Slawisches aus dem byzantinischen Bithynien*, "Münchener Zeitschrift für Balkankunde" 2 (1979), pp. 227-229, concluded that the names of both parents of Ioannikios are Slavic (Anastáso = Slavic version of the Greek name Anastasia).

192 Ph. Malingoudis, *Σλαβοι...*, pp. 147-148.

193 P. Lemerle, *Thomas le Slave*, Paris 1965, p. 284, footnote 112.

194 H. Ditten, *Prominente Slawen...*, p. 113.

195 Ibidem, pp. 104-106, but at the same time this researcher rightly emphasizes that the sources do not speak of the Slavic origin of the patrician, and that his name Sisinius was of Oriental origin, Ibidem, pp. 105-106.

196 Ibidem, pp. 106-107.

197 Ibidem, p. 113.

198 Ibidem, pp. 108-109.

199 Ibidem, pp. 115-116.

the middle of the ninth century²⁰⁰ and, above all, the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople Niketas I (766-780).²⁰¹ We had to wait almost 1200 years longer for John Paul II, a Pope of Slavic origin in Rome.

All in all, however, it is not a large group. One of the reasons for such a small presence of Slavs among Byzantine officials may lie in the long adherence of the Balkan Slavs in paganism until the ninth century. In the Christian empire, it could not be seen well. After the Slavs gradually lost their independence in the Byzantine state in the 9th-10th centuries, it was more difficult for the Slavic aristocracy to reach high positions in the state and church apparatus. Nevertheless, the archons of Sclavinias usually received Byzantine honorary titles.²⁰² Such a man was the voivode of Zachlumian, proconsul and patrician Michael Vysevic (10th century), whose family originated from the land on the Vistula River.²⁰³

ECONOMY

It can be assumed that before entering the Roman territory, the Slavs had different or partly different settlement habits than after their occupation of Roman lands, where they had at their disposal differently built houses and settlements.

The Byzantine Emperor Leo VI stated *expressis verbis* that the Slavs came to the Eastern Roman Empire as nomads.²⁰⁴ However, the word *nomades* is not unambiguous in Greek and can mean both real nomads and nomadic peoples in general. The Slavs were neither nomads, like the Avars and (Proto) Bulgarians, nor even transhumant shepherds, like the Vlachs. Sparse but unambiguous data from Byzantine historical sources from the 6th-7th centuries provide evidence that the Slavs were already farmers before crossing the Danube.²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, we have the information of Procopius of Caesarea about the frequent change of residences by the Slavs (κοινὸν δ' ἔστιν ἅπασιν τοῖς ταύτῃ τὸ περὶ τὰς ἀμεταναστάσεις εὐμαρὲς...),²⁰⁶ which,

200 Ibidem, pp. 116-117.

201 Ibidem, pp. 111, 117.

202 See W. Seibt, *Weitere Beobachtungen zu Siegeln früher Slawenarchonten in Griechenland*, in: *Byzantium. State and Society. In Memory of Nikos Oikonomides*, ed. A. Avramea, A. Laiou, E. Chrysos, Athens 2003, pp. 459-466 with the seals of the Slavic archons cited.

203 Cons. Porph. DAI, cc. 32-33 = TNDS 3, pp. 441, 446 and commentary, n. 56, p. 471; T. Wasilewski, *Wiślańska dynastia i jej zachlumskie państwo w IX-X wieku*, "Pamiętnik Słowiański. Czasopismo naukowe poświęcone słowianoznawstwu" 15 (1965), pp. 23-61.

204 Leon, *Taktica*, XIX, 79 and 99. The alleged reluctance of the Slavs to farming, *ibidem*, XIX 106.

205 Ph. Malingoudis, *Beležki vŕrchu materialnata kultura na rannoslavjanskite plemena v Gŕpkija*, "Istoričeski Pregled" 41 (1985), pp. 64-71.

206 Proc. Bella VII 14, 24.

however, can only indicate the type of farming they carried out.²⁰⁷ Sources from the same culture circle say that in the 7th century the Slavs were engaged in agricultural production.²⁰⁸ In addition to cereals; millet, wheat, rye, oats, they cultivated flax and hemp, as well as legumes such as peas, beans, lentils and vetch, which also contributed to the increase in soil productivity during crop rotation. Cucumbers, onions, radishes, turnips, and pumpkins were grown in the gardens, there were cherries, apples, pears, various varieties of plums and peaches, and walnuts in the orchards. They knew parsley and garlic²⁰⁹. Also on the basis of research on the Slavic toponymy of Greece, it can be easily shown that the basis of the economy of the Slavs who settled in the Greek lands was agriculture.²¹⁰ The Slavs brought with them knowledge of agriculture, as well as knowledge of agricultural tools.²¹¹ The arrival of the Slavic tribes in Greece did not mean a serious break in the continuation of provincial material culture, especially in the area of agrarian culture, since the invaders occupied previously cultivated land and even expanded the range of it through grubbing.²¹² It is also possible to attest to the burning of forests for the establishment of new settlements, as can be seen from the etymology of the name of the village Ζυγοβίστι (Slavic: “Žegovište”)

207 Examples of changes of residence by the agricultural population in connection with the transfer of farmland are presented by R. Lasch, *Die Landwirtschaft der Naturvölker...*, pp. 31 ff. The headquarters were moved annually, but also less frequently, every 2, 3, or even every 4-6 years, J.G.D. Clark, *Europa prehistoryczna-podstawy gospodarcze*, Warszawa 1957, p. 121.

208 J. Herrmann, *Siedlung, Wirtschaft und gesellschaftliche Verhältnisse der slavischen Stämme zwischen Oder/Neisse und Elbe*, Berlin 1968, pp. 79-80.

209 M. Beranová, *Der Obst-und Weinbau bei Slawen im frühen Mittelalter nach archäologischen Quellen*, in: *Vznik a počátky Slovanů. Sborník pro studium slovanských starožitností*, vol. 7, ed. J. Poulík, Praha 1972, pp. 207-241.

210 Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 57. Also note “ὁ σανός” oraz “τὸ σανό” (“siano”- hay), Λεξικό της κοινής νεοελληνικής, ed. Triantafyllides, Thessaloniki 1998.

211 The agricultural tools used by the Slavs attested in the archaeological material include wooden sochs, hoes, harrows, sickles, and querns. Thanks to cross ploughing, even a *socha* with a wooden ploughshare (later replaced by an iron ploughshare, but not in all areas at the same time) was a fairly effective ploughing tool, E. Mühle, *Stowianie...*, pp. 104-105. Procopius, *Bella*, VII 14.23; TNDS 2, p. 61, noticed oxen and other animals as sacrificial animals among the Slavs.

212 Slavic local names semantically related to the grubbing up were compiled by Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente*, p. 58. Very common in southern Greece is the toponym λάζος (from the Slavic lazъ, “arable land obtained by grubbing”. In the southern Peloponnese alone, it occurs 44 times, Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 60. Another Slavic term for grubbing up is ‘ledina, Vasmer, SG, pp. 83, 169 and Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 60. In the Epirotic dialect there is a linguistic loan λαζίνα (Polish “łozina”), in the sense of “spring pasture for sheep”, E.A. Μπογκά, *Τα γλωσσικά ιδιώματα της Ηπείρου* Ιωάννινα, vol. 1, Ioannina 1964, p. 207. With regard to the terms ‘torъ’ and ‘prošeka’, Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 63. In the onomastics of the Peloponnese toponyms appear derived from the Slavic adjective “jalova” (“barren land”), J. Georgacas, W.A. McDonald, *Place Names of South-west Peloponnesus*, Minneapolis 196, p. 28, s.v. Γιάλοβα.

in Gortyn, in western Arcadia, located at an altitude of 1000 meters, on the Mainalon mountain.²¹³

Even today, in some villages of the Peloponnesian Mani, formerly inhabited by the Milingi, the word *οτοκα* (*otoka*) is used to describe the threshing floor, the Slavic etymology of which is undisputed. It is a noun that in most Slavic languages has been preserved in the sense of "surround", "island".²¹⁴ Nevertheless, it is not an *ad hoc* semantic novelty among the Slavs of the Peloponnese, since in the north-eastern, Danubian part of Bulgaria it also occurs in the sense of "threshing floor".²¹⁵ This clearly proves its antiquity. Another term for the *gumno* in the area inhabited by the Milingi, but also in the areas of neighboring Laconia and Tryphylia, is the appellative "moltъ, which, after passing ca. the middle of the ninth century, liquida-metathesis in the Slavic language must have been "mlat" or "molot" and also means, "threshing floor". This noun, which only secondarily took on the meaning of "hammer", in its original meaning occurs in most Slavic languages.²¹⁶ The exception is Bulgarian and its dialects in the southern part of the former Yugoslavia, where only the meaning of "hammer" is known.²¹⁷ Since the Slavic place names preserved in Greek were petrified before the passage of liquida-metathesis, we must assume that they were created before the middle of the ninth century, and therefore it is an ancient *terminus ante quem*, from the epoch of the arrival of the Slavs to the Greek provinces of the Roman Empire. The name of the large, flat stones, used by the inhabitants of some villages in the Mani, in Messenia, used to enclose the threshing floor, also remains in connection with the barn. The name is *νόσταβα* and, according to Phedon Malingoudis, it should be derived from the words "o-staviti", "to set up, to put around".²¹⁸

The cultivation of cereals was not an innovation introduced in the new homeland. This is indicated by the all-Slavic names of weeds found in agricultural fields: "kăkol/tares" (*Agrostemma githago*), whence the Modern Greek language loan in the Messenian Mani: *κόγκολι*, further in the same territory we also meet: "bromes", "clover".²¹⁹

213 Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 59. Malingoudis points out that the Slavic past of this settlement is beyond doubt - this is evidenced not only by 10 Slavic microtoponyms in the area (out of about 140 in total) - but also by the story that persists in the village to this day, about the fact that children who did die before being baptized return home at night in the form of a lynx that causes mischief and damage. These beings are referred to in *Ζυγοβίστι* by the name *σμερδάκια*, which is probably related to the word "smerd" (p. 59).

214 Ph. Malingoudis, *Studien...*, pp. 80-81.

215 H. Vakarelski, *Etnografija na Blgarija*, Sofia 1974, pp. 130-131, 137 map no. 6.

216 Ph. Malingoudis, *Studien...*, pp. 70-71.

217 Idem, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 62.

218 Idem, *Studien...*, p. 172.

219 Ibidem, pp. 170-171.

The ancient Slavic terminology of agricultural organization is indicated by the name of the field: *κολενίτζα*, from the words “kolěno” (knee)²²⁰ and *πασίδι* – the fragment of landed estate, from the word “pas” (belt).²²¹

Settlement terminology: “dimnica” (hearth, homestead), “selo” (village), “grad” (stronghold, fortification).

Also poultry management terms such as ‘chicken coop’, ‘hen’, ‘[chicken] comb’²²² do not belong to the vocabulary of nomads, but of farmers.

The difference in the agrarian technology of the Greeks and the newly arrived Slavs will seem much smaller when we take into account two basic facts. First, the early Byzantine era did not make any discernible progress in this regard compared to the Roman era. Secondly, it is necessary to free oneself from the fascination with the then unsurpassed representative art of Byzantine palaces and to descend to the level of a real comparison of the technology of the Slavs and the hut of a provincial Roman (Greek/Illyrian/Thracian) farmer. On many occasions, the “barbarization” of elements of material culture did not result from the emergence of barbarian groups, but resulted from internal, social and economic causes in the Greek territory of the Roman Empire.²²³

The adoption of Roman technology related to agriculture (iron agricultural tools) could have taken place as early as the 6th-7th centuries. The Slavs also became familiar with the technique of producing Roman kitchen pottery. Many elements of Roman continuity can be seen in the Slavic production of ornaments and in residential construction. A former Slavic (semi-) dugout house is rarely found south of the Danube. Here, the invaders adopted the traditions of Mediterranean construction with the dominant use of wind-dried bricks.²²⁴

Knowledge of the construction of “ships” other than dugouts, seems to be indicated by Theophylactus’ passage about their construction on the orders of the Avar Khagan for the crossing of the Sava River.²²⁵ Of interest are the Slavic place names in the Peloponnese, such as *Μοστίτσα*, *Μοστίτσι*, *Μοστενίτσα*, which probably referred to the Roman bridge structures encountered by the Slavs.²²⁶

220 Ibidem, p. 172. On the basis of two documents of purchase and sale of agricultural land from 1742 and 1784.

221 Ibidem, p. 172. The term *πασίδι* is a Slavic-Modern Greek language hybrid, with the Greek suffix *ίδι* (deminutivus), idem, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 63.

222 Ph. Malingoudis, *Studien...*, pp. 168-170.

223 So argues D. Pallas, *Données nouvelles sur quelques boucles et fibules considérées comme avars et slaves et sur Corinthe le VI^e et le IX^e s.*, “Byzantinobulgarica” 7 (1981), pp. 295-318.

224 Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 65.

225 Theoph. Sim. VI 4, 5.

226 Vasmer, SG, p. 136 No. 62; Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 65.

The name of the city Καλάβρυτα located on the ancient river Kerynitis and the name of the Epirote village Καλάρρυτα come from the words “kolovъrtъ” (turnstile). This term may be related to the operation of water mills.²²⁷ However, it would be premature to conclude from this that such mills could have been known to the Slavs before the invasion of Greece.²²⁸ It should be added that “kolovъrtъ” has further meanings in Slavic languages, *inter alia* it describes a kind of crossroads.

In his description of the area around Thessalonica at the beginning of the tenth century, the historian Johannes Kaminiates noted that on the plain extending west of the city towards Berroe there were [ethnically?] heterogeneous (ἀμφίμικτοι) villages²²⁹ inhabited by the Slavic tribes of the Drugovites and Sagudates, who pay (tribute?) to Thessalonica, while others [the Slavs of this plain] pay the neighboring Scythians (*i.e.*, the Bulgarians). Kaminiates, argues that the Thessalonians and Scythians learned to live in peace, carefully guarding it and satisfying each other's needs through trade.²³⁰ This text is customarily cited as the crowning proof that after the invasion era, relations between the Slavs and the Byzantines were peaceful, and the two ethnicities not only learned to live in peace, but also to derive benefits from this state of affairs by satisfying each other's needs through trade.²³¹ This relationship cannot be idealized or generalized, although a certain *modus vivendi* must have existed in other areas of Greece. He points out that the Macedonian Slavs paid tributes to both Thessaloniki and the Bulgarians.²³² Kaminiates' account goes on to show that they also had to provide military aid when requested, which they did reluctantly, as evidenced by the small number of Slavic archers who arrived at the besieged city by the Arabs at the request of the Byzantine authorities and their subsequent highly ambiguous attitude during the Muslim occupation of Thessalonica.²³³

227 Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 65.

228 I am rather inclined to assume that the Slavs learned the construction of water mills from the Greeks, because such mills were well known there, see S. Germanidou, *Watermills in Byzantine Greece (Fifth-Twelfth Centuries). Approach to the Archaeology of Byzantine Hydraulic Milling Technology*, “Byzantion” 84 (2014), pp. 185-201.

229 The word ἀμφίμικτοι used by Kaminiates does not denote mixed Greco-Slavic villages, as they are not mentioned until the nineteenth century, as shown by G. Tsaras, *Καὶ ἀμφίμικτους τινὰς κώμας...*, pp. 177-200. It is also difficult to believe that it is a matter of a twofold political dependence (*i.e.* on Byzantium and on Bulgaria) of the inhabitants of the Thessalonian plain, which seems to be assumed by the authors of TNDS 3, p. 288, note 2. It seems that the term komai does not refer to specific settlements called villages (komai), but to specific tribal communities thus defined by the Greek author: the Drugovites, Sagudates, and others.

230 Io. Cam., *De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, VI 5-7.

231 Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 67.

232 Io. Cam., *De expugnatione Thessalonicae*, VI 5-7; XX 1-6.

233 Ibidem, XX 1-6; XXI 1; XXV 8; XL 4-10.

More light on the coexistence of Slavs and Greeks, which in the modern era ended with the absorption of the Slavic element in most of the Hellenic territories, is shed by Slavic loanwords in Modern Greek. Leaving aside loans in individual dialects of Greek, loans in the general Greek language are the most telling. They are found in the terminology of agricultural tools, poultry farming, fishing, beekeeping, bakery, textile crafts and inland waters.²³⁴

A few examples. The Romans and Byzantines had known the harrow for a long time. In Greek, they were called βωλοκόπος, a term that is still found in the dialects of the Aegean islands. Nevertheless, it was supplanted from the general Modern Greek language by the Slavic name σβάρινα-“borna” (later: “brana”, “borona”, “brona”, harrow).²³⁵ The hoe (μοστικά) found its way into the Thessalian dialects and into the Tzakonian dialects,²³⁶ *kosa* (κόσα) is a language borrowing in the dialects of central Greece.²³⁷

Slavic origin of nomenclature with the -ITΣ-Suffixes (-ic, -ice), which was very widespread throughout the Greek area, was questioned by Demetrius Georgakas in a very erudite work.²³⁸ I don't feel competent to enter into this discussion.

CONCLUSION

The medieval history of the Slavs in the Byzantine Empire, *recte* the Roman Empire, is not easy to summarize, mainly due to gaps in documentation. The hundred-year period of Slavic invasions of the Balkans, from the end of the 520s to the year 626, with the significant participation of the Turkic peoples, especially the Avars and Bulgarians, ended with the mass settlement of the Slavs in ancient Macedonia, Epirus (mainly in the province of Epirus vetus) and Greece proper. In the middle of the 7th century, the Byzantine Empire, threatened by the Arabs, held in the European provinces, apart from the islands, on the mainland, only large cities and fortresses on the coast of the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea, and the Adriatic Sea. The Roman population was partly murdered, partly fled (including bishops) to hard-to-reach

²³⁴ Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 66.

²³⁵ M. Beranová, *Zemědělství starých Slovanů*, Praha 1980, pp. 253-254; *Etymologičeskij slovar slavjanskich jazykov*, ed. O. Nikolaevič Trubacev, vol. 2, Moskva 1978, pp. 204-206; Λεξικό της Κοινής Νεοελληνικής, p. 1198, s.v. σβάρινα [zwárna]; N.P. Andriotis, *Ετυμολογικό Λεξικό της Κοινής Νεοελληνικής*, Thessaloniki 1995, p. 318, s.v. σβάρινα.

²³⁶ Ph. Malingoudis, *Frühe slavische Elemente...*, p. 66.

²³⁷ E.A. Μπόγκα, *Τα γλωσσικά ιδιώματα της Ηπείρου Ιωάννινα...*, 1, p. 189, s.v. κόσα (ή). Also in the sense of “female braid”.

²³⁸ D.J. Georgakas, *A Graeco-Slavic Controversial Problem Reexamined: The -ITΣ-Suffixes*, in: *Byzantine, Medieval, and Modern Greek; Their Origin and Ethnological Implication*, Athenai 1982.

places (mountains, islands, larger cities), and partly enslaved. At the time, the Slavs adhered to the custom of giving captives a choice after a certain period of time, whether to remain a member of the community or to leave freely. Whether this was a common custom is difficult to say. Presumably, no. It is still difficult to answer the question to what extent the Roman population should remain in the interior of the Greek provinces. The success of the Slavs was due, on the one hand, to their large numbers and the rapid adaptation of the Roman way of conducting war, and on the other hand, to the revealed abilities of the Slavic kings and voivodes, who, for example, were able to strategically strive for the conquest of such an important city as Thessalonika for a very long time. Despite these efforts, however, they were unable to conquer the largest cities of the empire, which was not at all due to their "agricultural" way of life, since it is known that they intended to settle in Thessalonika with their families. Smaller towns and fortresses, however, fell victim to their aggression. The takeover of the Roman Balkans by the Slavs was also due to favourable external circumstances. A factor facilitating the attacks, and then breaking the Roman defensive line on the Danube, were the tragic consequences of the war of the Eastern Roman Empire with the Persians (the last quarter of the 6th and the first quarter of the 7th centuries), and then after the year 632 with the Arabs. On the other hand, the organizational role of the Avars in the process of liquidating Roman rule in the Balkans was overestimated in earlier historiography. They undoubtedly played an important role in the wars with the Byzantines in the years 591-626, subjugating groups of the Slavs living on the middle Danube, organizing several expeditions, including the great, unsuccessful, Avaro-Slavic expedition (in alliance with the Persians) to Constantinople in 626. Nevertheless, their small number (20,000) did not allow them to subjugate all of the Slavs to the Khagan, nor to take part in the colonization of the Balkans, with the exception of Pannonia. From the 580s onwards, the Slavs began to occupy the lands of Greece proper, and this process ended in 614. However, they never created larger states in this area, capable of defending the occupied areas.

Byzantium recognized the political fragmentation of the Slavs very early on and was able to take advantage of it. By the end of the eighth century, the Slavs had begun to lose control of the conquered lands in Greece and Thrace. Re-Romanization, most often but not very strictly called "re-Hellenization," did not begin until the very end of the eighth century. The Byzantines then overran part of the Peloponnese. In other areas, in central Greece, Thessaly, and Macedonia, the Byzantine "control" of the Slavs took the form of imposing a more or less illusory suzerainty on the "Sclaviniai", which only became more complete from the tenth century onwards. In many territories, in Macedonia, Epirus, and the Peloponnese, some of the Slavs retained their ethnic and political identity under the authority of their tribal/territorial chieftains, who obtained

Byzantine official and honorary titles. The ethnic identity of Slavic groups lasted the longest in Macedonia and the Peloponnese. The network of Slavic settlements in Greece was dense, which is unambiguously indicated by the preserved toponyms. The settlement success of the Slavs turned out to be more durable than the political success. This is not the place to discuss the completely exaggerated thesis of J. Ph. Fallmerayer that the modern Greeks are not descendants of the ancient Hellenes, but only of the Slavs and Albanians, but there can be no doubt that both of them took part in the ethnogenesis of the modern Greek nation. This is evidenced by the Slavic toponymy, which has persisted until recent times and modern genetic research. The Slavs brought to Byzantium their own culture (especially agriculture) and religion (cremation funerals, as for eg. shows Slavic cemetery in Olympia), the traces of which were erased as a result of the Christianization processes of the 9th-10th centuries. The language of the Christian liturgy was Greek, which was conducive to the slow displacement of the Slavic language in many regions. However, the Slavs maintained their distinctiveness throughout the Middle Ages and later in Macedonia, Epirus and even in the mountainous areas of the Peloponnese. Some Slavs made a career in the military, civilian and ecclesiastical structures of Byzantium, reaching the highest positions (inter alia Niketas, the Patriarch of Constantinople). Unfortunately, none of them wrote even the simplest chronicle of their own people. Elements of their own material (agricultural) terminology were passed on by the Slavs to their contemporary Greeks. Nevertheless, we still know surprisingly little or nothing about many important aspects of the history of the Slavs in the medieval Byzantine Empire. We can only hope that further progress in research, especially archaeological research, will change this state of affairs.

ABSTRACT

This is the second part of a critical outline of the Slavic invasions of the Eastern Roman Empire and the occupation by Slavic tribes of vast swaths of Macedonia, Epirus, and Greece. The origins of their raids and the beginnings of settlement in some territories of Greece, including the Peloponnese, are analysed. The author analyzes the most important problems of the history of the Slavs in Roman Greece, Macedonia and Epirus in the 7th-15th centuries. Aspects of Slavic social and economic life in this area are also commented on.

Keywords: Slavs, Byzantium, Greece, invasions, settlements

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WHO IS THE VICTOR? FROM THE HISTORY OF INTERRELATIONS OF THE LATE ANTIQUITY GEORGIAN POLITY *KARTLI* WITH SASANIAN IRAN



INTRODUCTION

Historians have always paid considerable attention to the representation of conflicts, they described particular battles or large-scale military clashes in fine detail, however, the interrelations between vanquisher and vanquished were addressed relatively rarely. Meanwhile this is a very promising topic if one looks at it from the point of anthropologically orientated history.

In this article, I will approach it through the Georgian experience. The sources for all periods of Georgian history contain a huge number of facts relevant for investigating the issue in question. However, this time I will limit my research to just one case. In particular, I intend to familiarize readers with the fascinating story of an Iranian prince, who in the first half of the 4th century, at the age of seven, took the royal throne of the Kartli region of Georgia.¹ In the early 330s, while he was active, Christianity

¹ *Karti* (//Kingdom of Kartli) was the pre-modern state with a political center in the eastern part of present-day Georgia. It was founded in the 3rd century BCE. Since then, in certain epochs, this state encompassed not only lands situated to the east of the Likhi Range, but also the provinces in the northwestern and southwestern parts of Georgia. *Iberia* is a term used by Greek and Roman authors to designate the above-mentioned state. As for its spelling: here and henceforth (including the cases when I quote translated by others sources) for the Romanization rules of Georgian consonants I rely on the following publications: Sh. Apridonidze, *Georgian*

became the official religion of Kartli. This was crucial turn in Georgian history. The name of this prince was Mirian (Mirean).

The countries of the South Caucasus, including Kartli, were an area of constant interest for the Sasanians. Despite fierce resistance, the local powers of the Caucasus, as usual, suffered defeats, and Iran emerged victorious. Iranian cultural and political influence in this region was enormous.²

The promotion of the Sasanian prince to the royal throne of Kartli should have proved to be very beneficial to Iran. This was a trump card in the hands of Sasanian authorities, and they evidently planned to use it for further strengthening their positions in Kartli and the South Caucasus as a whole.

However, the result appeared to be the total opposite: Kartli, under the leadership of the King Mirian, managed to leave the Sasanian political orbit and join the *Byzantine Commonwealth*,³ even more, it became one of the founders of this liturgical-cultural community.⁴

My article aims to represent just this curious fact, which occurred in the distant late antiquity era.

MAIN SOURCE

The Christianization of Kartli is reflected in many different types of Georgian and foreign sources. The informants are both contemporaries and later authors.⁵ As far as the king was one of the main actors of the entire process, all these sources contain testimonies about the King Mirian. However, only 11th century Georgian historian Leonti Mroveli has preserved direct information about the Iranian origin of Mirian. I have intentionally emphasized the word *direct* because other sources provide indirect evidence.

Three writings by Leonti Mroveli are in our disposal: *The Lives of the Georgian Kings, the Patriarchs of the Georgians, and of their Progeny* (ცხოვრება

Consonants and Their Romanization, in: *United Nations Working Paper on Geographical Names*, Vienna 2011, pp. 2-5: *Romanization of Georgian. Georgia 2002 national system; BGN/PCGN 2009 Agreement Checked for validity and accuracy* – October 2017. https://geonames.nga.mil/geonames/GNS-Search/GNSDocs/romanization/ROMANIZATION_OF_GEORGIAN.pdf

² S.H. Rapp Jr. *The Sasanian World through Georgian Eyes. Caucasia and the Iranian Commonwealth in Late Antique Georgian Literature*, Farnham-Burlington 2014.

³ The term was coined by Dimitri Obolensky (*The Byzantine Commonwealth: Eastern Europe, 500-1453*) to refer to the area where Byzantine general influence was spread during the Middle Ages by the Byzantine Empire.

⁴ S.H. Rapp Jr., *Caucasia and the Second Byzantine commonwealth: Byzantinization in the Context of Regional Coherence*, An NCEEER Working Paper, 2012, pp. 1-30, https://www.ucis.pitt.edu/nceer/2012_826-5g_Rapp2.pdf

⁵ მ. ჩხარტიშვილი. ქართული ჰაგიოგრაფიის წყაროთმცოდნეობითი შესწავლის პრობლემები („ცხოვრება წმიდისა ნინოსი“), თბილისი 1987 [M. Chkhartishvili, *Problems of Source-critical Study of Georgian Hagiography (Vita of Saint Nino)*, Tbilisi 1987].

ქართველთა მეფეთა და პირველთაგანთა მამათა და ნათესავთა)⁶ covering the period from times of ethno genesis of Georgians up to the 11th century and revised versions of two Georgian hagiographical compilations: *The Conversion of King Mirian and the Entire Kartli by our Saint and Blessed Mother Apostle Nino* (მოქცევაი მირიან მეფისაი და მის თანა ყოვლისა ქართლისაი წმიდისა და ნეტარისა დედისა ჩვენისა ნინო მოციქულისა მიერ)⁷ and *The Martyrdom of Saint and Glorious Archil, who was King of Kartli* (წამებაი წმიდისა და დიდებულისა მოწამისა არჩილისი რომელი–ესე იყო მეფე ქართლისაი).

Saint Nino was an Illuminatrix of Georgians. Saint Archil was a king of Kartli (Archil II), martyred by Arab invaders in the 8th century. The three above-mentioned compilations are included in the collection of medieval Georgian historiographical writings *The Life of Kartli* (ქართლის ცხოვრება)⁸ composed in the 12th century in the time of the famous Georgian King David the Builder (1089-1125). Leonti Mroveli's contributions represent the opening part of this collection.⁹

Leonti Mroveli had used the monument of medieval Georgian historiography *The Conversion of Kartli* (მოქცევაი ქართლისაი)¹⁰ as a source for his recension of *The Vita of Saint Nino*. The comparison of the original recension of the *Vita of Saint Nino* included in *The Conversion of Kartli* with Leonti Mroveli's modification allows the researcher to identify the methods practiced by Leonti Mroveli while working with the sources. It is evident that the historian respected his sources; however, at the same time, he did not copy their information without prior analysis and in some cases creatively modified

6 Henceforth: *The Lives of Georgian Kings*.

7 Henceforth: *The Vita of Saint Nino*.

8 Henceforth: *Georgian Chronicles*.

9 For the English translation see: *The Georgian Chronicles of Kartlis Tskhovreba translated and with commentary*, Editor in Chief of the English edition S. Jones, Tbilisi 2014; for the original text see ქართლის ცხოვრება, მთავარი რედ. რ.მეტრეველი, თბილისი 2008 [*Georgian Chronicles*, editor-in chief R. Metreveli]; for the discussion about the structure of the monument, see M. Chkhartishvili, *Discussing Some Features of Georgian Medieval Historiography. Two Verbal Portraits of Duke Stephanos I*, in: *Laudator Temporis Acti. Studia in Memoriam Ioannis A. Božilov*, vol. 2, *Ius, Imperium, Potestas Litterae, Ars et Archaeologia*, ed. I.A. Biliarsky, Sofia 2018, pp. 37-68.

10 For Russian translation of this monument source, critical and historiographical commentaries regarding it and reasoning the monument's chronology, attribution, structure, see მ. ჩხარტიშვილი. ქართული ჰაგიოგრაფიის წყაროთმცოდნეობითი შესწავლის პრობლემები („ცხოვრებაი წმიდისა ნინოსი“), თბილისი 1987 [M. Chkhartishvili, *Problems of Source-critical Study of Georgian Hagiography (Vita of Saint Nino)*, Tbilisi 1987] and М. Чхатишвили, Обращение Грузии, transl. and comment. Е. Такайшвили, Тбилиси 1989; for the English translation and historiographical commentaries see C.B. Lerner, *The Wellspring of Georgian Historiography*, London 2004. For the original text, see ძველი ქართული აგიოგრაფიული ლიტერატურის ძეგლები ი. აბულაძის რედაქციით, თბილისი 2020, გვ. 81-163 [*Monuments of Old Georgian Hagiographical Literature*, ed. I. Abuladze, Tbilisi 2020, pp. 81-163]

them based on parallel data obtained by him or his own logical considerations. While doing so he was sometimes mistaken, but even modern scientists with their professional skills and advanced research technologies are not immune to inaccuracies.

The proto text of *The Martyrdom of St. Archil* has not reached us. We also do not know all of the sources used by Leonti Mroveli for his main work that is *The Life of Georgian Kings and their Progeny*. However, based on the analysis of individual pieces of evidence, a portrait of Leonti Mroveli as a historian can still be represented: Leonti Mroveli was an honest historian; he used reliable sources and tried to provide well-documented information.

DATA AND DISCUSSION

One can find information on Mirian's Iranian origin in *The Life of Georgian Kings and their Progeny*.

The historian begins with information on King Aspagur - Mirian's predecessor on the Georgian royal throne. Aspagur belonged to the Parnavazian dynasty.

This royal dynasty is named after of its founder, Parnavaz, the king of Kartli, who lived in the epoch of Alexander the Great. According to Leonti Mroveli, Parnavaz founded the kingdom of Kartli. King Parnavaz established not only a new state, but renewed all the principal markers of Georgian ethnic identity. For example, he introduced a new religion, created the idol Armazi and made him the main deity of the Georgian pagan pantheon; he endowed the Georgian language with official status (before him several languages were used by inhabitants of the Kartli) and in the context of his cultural reforms initiated the creation of the Georgian alphabet – an unique and perfect writing system.¹¹

However, let us return to our story about Mirian's predecessor. King Aspagur had no male heir, only a daughter by name Abeshura. When he died during one of the military campaigns, the Georgians faced a crisis of power: no legal heir remained to take the royal throne.

The situation was further aggravated by Iran's expansionist plans for the South Caucasus and, moreover, its actual presence in this region: in the first half of the 3rd century, the Iranians made great progress in the neighboring Armenia, and it was obvious that Kartli would be the next target.

11 M. Chkhartishvili, *Narrative Sources on the Creation of Georgian Alphabet*, "Pro Georgia. Journal of Kartvelological Studies" 31 (2021), pp. 101-113.

Leonti Mroveli tells that a high-ranking official of the Georgian state, second after the king, the commander¹² Maezhan, summoned the regional governors¹³ of Kartli. They begged God that they would not lose their minds because of this indescribable sorrow. Maezhan began analyzing the situation with reference to Armenia. He made comment on the assassination of the king of Armenia and the aggressive intentions of the Iranian shah towards the entire world and underlined that in a stalemate the Georgians were like sheep without their shepherd. If the Georgians had even a hundredth¹⁴ part of the strength that the Iranians possessed, and if there was anyone alive from the Georgian royal family who could take the throne, Georgians would sacrifice themselves. However, they had no royal heir. Maezhan proposed a plan of action. According to it, Georgians should welcome the Persian king and ask him to marry his son to the daughter of the King Aspatur:

Aspatur had no son, only a daughter. All the *eristavs* of Kartli gathered in the city of Mtskheta, called by the *sp'asp'et'*, whose name was Maezhan. Filled with grief they decided unanimously: 'We should not give ourselves to sorrow so as not to lose our minds, but we must look for a means to rid ourselves of our misfortune and these dangers.' Then *sp'asp'et'* Maezhan said: 'If we had forces equal to a third of the Persians, we would give our lives and resist them. And if our King had an heir or there was some descendant of our kings deserving to reign, we would fortify ourselves in our towns and fortresses and would, if necessary, eat human flesh to survive, like our forefathers did. But the bad times have come and have brought us such sorrows, like the murder by the Persians of the great king of Armenia, and the seizure by them of Armenia to which our kingdom was allied. The king of the Persians has opened his mouth and wants to swallow the whole world. We have nobody to withstand him, we are left as orphans, like sheep, without a shepherd. Now my decision is this: let us submit to him and ask him to make his son our King. Let us implore him to marry his son to the daughter of our Aspatur.¹⁵

At the same time the commander Maezhan fixed the points that had to be agreed upon by both sides: Georgians should ask the shah that he

12 *Sp'asp'et' i.*

13 *Eristavs*. This is an ancient Georgian social term. It was used for referring to the regional authorities. This is a portmanteau word, and means *head of community* (*eri* - community, people, *tavi* - head, leader).

14 In some manuscripts instead of *hundredth part* is *third part*.

15 Leonti Mroveli, *The Lives of Georgian Kings*, in: *The Georgian Chronicles of Kartlis Tskhovreba translated and with commentary*, Editor in Chief of the English edition S. Jones, Tbilisi 2014, pp. 40-41.

does not mix them with the Persians; does not force them to betray their faith; hold them with honor. If the shah will not agree with these points and force Georgians to abandon faith of the fathers, allow Persians to dominate them, show disrespect to them and kill the members of Georgian royal family, in such a situation it will be better for Georgians to die in the struggle against the enemy.¹⁶

Actually, this plan coincided with the empire-building scheme tested by the Sasanians: the shahanshahs of this dynasty directly ruled Iran proper and the provinces beyond of Iran ("non-Iran") were ruled through the vice-roys who often were their sons.

All approved this plan and approached the shah with this request. The shah took the Georgian proposal very seriously, carefully considered the expected strategic benefits of this negotiation, and gave back the positive answer.

A little later shah himself with his 7-years old son Mirian and his mother - the shah's mistress - visited the capital city of Kartli Mtskheta. After some time passed, the shah and his mistress departed:

The King of the Persians married her [Abeshura, M.Ch.] to his son, who was then a boy of seven years of age. He was born to the King's concubine and his name was, in Persian, Mikhran, and in Georgian - Mirian. He is the very Mirian, who in his old age came to know God the Creator, received the Gospel of the apostles from Saint Nino, and began to profess the Holy Trinity and worship the Holy Cross.¹⁷

The shah left the regent/foster-father Mirvanoz for Mirian with Iranian cavalry. These troops were located within the states surrounding Kartli and only seven thousand chosen soldiers were left in Georgian capital to safeguard Mirian. The will of the shah was that his son alongside observing the paternal faith *i.e.*, fire-worshipping, venerated Georgian idols. The pluralistic religious upbringing of the juvenile king was one of the main points of the agreement:

Mirian was seven years old at that time. Mirian's mother was also with King Khosrov¹⁸ in Kartli, but he did not leave her with Mirian, because he loved Mirian's mother like his own self. But he left with Mirian one noble man by name of Mirvanoz as his tutor and governor. He also left him forty thousand select Persian horsemen. According to the oath,

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 41.

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ In medieval Georgian sources, this term was used for referring to Persian kings.

given by him to the Georgians he placed them not within the precincts of Kartli, but in Hereti, Movak'an and Armenia. He also ordered Mirvanoz to take from these Persians seven thousand choice horsemen and keep all of them in the city as guards for his son. He concluded peace with the Georgians on condition that only the gates of the fortress would be occupied by Persian troops, and there would be no other Persians in the country of Kartli who could mix with the local population. 'And let my son profess both religions: fire worship of our fathers, and your idols'. He did all this in accordance with the oath he had given at the very beginning.¹⁹

The information about Mirian that Leonti Mroveli tells us is not limited to this and I will give all testimonies below, but before that, I want to draw the readers' attention to the question of reliability. Can we trust this account? Is it history or fiction? At first glance, the story of the little prince who becomes king of a foreign country and later on plays a very important role in its life looks like an oriental romance.

However, as it turns out, it is factual history and not fiction;²⁰ we can identify the shah mentioned in the Georgian source with the real Sasanian ruler. There is sufficient evidence for this identification: Leonti Mroveli mentions the name of the Iranian shah to whom the Georgians approached with the above proposal: Ardashir. Since Mirian was a contemporary of Constantine the Great (306-337) (all available sources about the conversion of Kartli agree on this), the Shah Ardashir of Leonti Mroveli can not be the first Ardashir, *i.e.*, the founder of the Sasanian dynasty (224-240), but his grandson Hormizd I (270-271/272-273),²¹ who is also known as Hormizd-Ardašir.

Hormizd-Ardashir was only one year on the throne of Sasanian Empire, however, before that for many years he was the king of Armenia (he wore the title "Great King of Armenians"). He was appointed on this position by his father Šapur I after the Iranians' successful campaign in Armenia

19 Leonti Mroveli, *The Lives of Georgian Kings...*, pp. 41-42.

20 მ.ჩხარტიშვილი, ლეონტი მროველის მონათხრობი ქართლის პირველი ქრისტიანი მეფის მირიანის შესახებ: ისტორია თუ პოეზია? In: საისტორიო მეცნიერების სამსახურში.. ოთარ ჯანელიძე - 70, გორი 2024, გვ. 402-414 [M. Chkhartishvili, *The Testimonies of Leonti Mroveli on the first Christian King of Kartli Mirian: History or Poetry?*, in: *In Service to Historical Science*, The collection dedicated to 70th anniversary of Professor Otar Janelidze, Gori 2024, pp. 402-414]; მ.ჩხარტიშვილი, საქართველო III-V საუკუნეებში. ხოსროვანთა სამეფო სახლის ისტორია, თბილისი 2018 [M. Chkhartishvili, *Georgia in 3rd-5th Centuries. History of the Royal Family of Chosroids*, Tbilisi 2018].

21 Hormozd I - *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/hormozd-i>. Some scholars give different years (270-271) for the reign of Hormozd I. see: R.N. Fraye, *The History of Ancient Iran*, München 1984, p. 302.

in the 250s.²² In the light of this evidence, commander Maezhan's project seems not only real, but also expected: it should be inspired by the Georgian politicians' experience of previous positive in-person communications with Ardašīr of Armenia.

The next fact supporting this identification is an attitude to religious affairs. As was already mentioned above, Mirian's father Ardashir saw no problem in simultaneous professing two religions, *i.e.*, he thought it was possible to reconcile the mutually exclusive, actually non-compatible belief systems: he thought that Mirian could be Mazdean and at the same time venerate the idols of the Georgian pagan pantheon. The Shahanshah Hormozd I was also known for his pluralistic views towards religion: he promoted the Zoroastrian priest Kerdīr to the rank of chief priest. Under Shapur I, Kerdīr held the title "master of learning" and Hormozd I elevated him to the rank of magupet (= mobad), or chief, of the Magi, a title that previously was unknown. Kerdīr's aim was to purge Iran of all other religions, especially, from the Manichaeism. And in parallel with the elevation of Kartir, Hormozd I gave the Manichaean prophet, Mani, permission to continue his preaching. In this case too, the religious pluralism of the Sasanian ruler is paradoxical.

This unique feature characterized both - the Shahanshah Hormizd I (also known as Hormizd-Ardashir), and the Shah Ardashir mentioned by Leonti Mroveli.

Thus, Leonti Mroveli's story reflects actual historical occurrences.

However, let us continue displaying the biography of Mirian. Supposedly, the Shah Hormozd-Ardashir did not plan to leave his son in Kartli forever, but he died shortly after enthronement and it turned out that Mirian had to stay in Georgian state for his whole life.

Leonti Mroveli briefly, but essentially, describes the process of Mirian's "naturalization":

Mirian had grown up serving seven idols and fire. He liked the Georgians and, forgetting the Persian language, he learned Georgian. He added decorations to the idols and the temples, graciously treated the idolatrous priests, and with more diligence than any other King of Kartli, observed the ceremonies dedicated to the idols. He also decorated Parnavaz's grave. He did all this because of his love for the Georgians. He treated the Georgians kindly, exalting them in every possible way, and he did them every kind of good. The Georgians came to love him more than any other King of Kartli.²³

²² Šāpur I - *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, <https://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/shapur-i>

²³ Leonti Mroveli, *The Lives of Georgian Kings...*, p. 42.

The information about the decoration of the tomb of King Parnavaz actually is nothing but Mirian's intention to make it clear to his subjects that his policy was a continuation of the policy of King Parnavaz, *i.e.*, the policy based on the interests of the Georgian state.

Thus, King Mirian fully assumed Georgian identity and according to Leonti Mroveli this happened during the early period of his reign.

When Mirian was fifteen years old, his Georgian wife died and with it ended the reign of the Parnavaziani family:

The Georgians grieved, because of the death of their queen, but they remained faithful to Mirian, for there was no descendant of the Parnavazids worthy to reign over them. For that reason, Georgians accepted with love the reign of Mirian. King Mirian continued doing good things for the Georgians.²⁴

Mirian's second wife was a Greek princess. The decision to marry the Greek princess can be interpreted as his intention to have ties with west as well. At the same time Mirian invited his relative Peroz from Iran, married his daughter to him and made him high ranking official of the Georgian state:

Mirian [...] called on his relative in Persia, a descendant of the kings, by name of Peroz, who brought with him a great army. Mirian married his daughter to Peroz and gave him the lands from Khunani to Barda on both sides of the Mt'k'vari, and appointed him as *eristav*".²⁵

For a long period, Mirian kept an eye on the throne intrigues in Iran. Once Mirian even tried to use his army to announce his ambitions as the shah's son, however, he failed.²⁶ Perhaps, because of this failure, Mirian abandoned his plans for the Sasanian imperial throne and began fully taking into account the political interests of the state of which he was at the head.

As the reader might recall, the main point of the agreement between Georgians and Iranians was the inviolability of religion. About this is told in Leonti Mroveli's work *The Lives of Georgian Kings and their Progeny*. In another work, which deals with the activities of Saint Nino, Leonti Mroveli describes the fact of sudden destruction of Georgian idols. This fact itself, according to the author, was the result of a prayer of Saint Nino:

²⁴ Ibidem, p. 42.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 43.

²⁶ Ibidem, pp. 42-43.

That same instant, as Saint Nino finished her prayer, a western wind began to blow, a terrible peal of thunder was heard, and clouds appeared sweeping across the sky - a horrible omen. And the western wind brought with it the smell of bitter and stinking bile. When the people saw the approaching storm, they all ran into the city and the neighboring villages. And they had time to hide in their homes. Swiftly came the cloud of wrath, mercilessly cruel, and brought down hail with each hailstone equivalent to one lit'ra, upon the place where the idols stood, turning them into fine dust. And the frightful wind destroyed the walls of the fortress and swept them away into the clefts of the rocks, while Saint Nino remained tranquilly in the same place. Next day King Mirian came out with all the other people to look for their gods, but could not find them. And savage as they were, they were frightened, and they said grieving..."²⁷

Obviously, this circumstance should put the ruling elite of the Georgian state and, first of all, the king himself in a desperate situation, as the Georgian identity was based largely on the Georgian pagan religion. In such a case, it would be logical if Mirian replaced it with his paternal faith. Instead of that, Mirian decided to retain Georgian paganism and even made a proper plan for its revitalization.

At that time, Saint Nino was already in the capital city and had gained a great popularity among the common people: she had ability to cure illnesses without a medicine only; with prayers and touching the diseased with her hands. Although she acted secretly, the King Mirian knew about her. Therefore, the king invited Saint Nino to the palace. Saint Nino did not immediately agree to this, but later, when she cured Mirian's relative, the fire-worshiper Persian, Khuara, and the queen, of an incurable illness and because of this they believed in Christ, she still had to contact the king.²⁸

The king gave Nino a rather strange proposal: even though the idol of Armazi, the main god of the Georgian pagan pantheon, was destroyed, he still asked the missionary woman to become the chief priestess of Armazi, in exchange for which the king promised Saint Nino material prosperity and a socially prestigious position.²⁹

Saint Nino showed no interest in this strange proposal; in response, she briefly displayed to the king the history of Christianity. In this story, she skillfully included information about the greatest Christian relic, which, according to her, was buried in the land of Kartli. It was the Robe of the Lord, which allegedly was taken by the Georgian Jews attending the Crucifixion of the Lord and brought to Mtskheta.

27 Idem, *The Vita of Saint Nino...*, p. 51.

28 Ibidem, p. 57.

29 Ibidem.

The exact location of the Robe was unknown, but by tradition, it was buried in the royal garden. The second sacral item was the Mantle of Elijah, which was buried in the Jewish quarter. Its exact location was also unknown.

Saint Nino had learned about the Lord's Robe from her teacher who lived in Jerusalem and who before, her arrival in Kartli, informed her about this relic. She learned about the Mantle of Elijah from the local Jews.

These two saintly relics are presented as indication of the Lord's special attitude towards Georgians. They ensured Georgians to stay exclusive, even if they accepted trans-ethnic Christianity. Apparently, King Mirian saw this in the story of Saint Nino.

Mirian did not immediately comment on the story, but a little later, when he had fallen in danger during hunting and could not get help from pagan idols, he turned to the God of Saint Nino, *i.e.*, to Christ, and saved himself from the danger with His help. Anyway, this is how he had described his experience according to the source.³⁰ After that, Mirian believed in Christ and converted the country to Christianity.

It was the beginning of the thirties of the 4th century. Mirian sent ambassadors to Constantine the Great and received clergy and relics from there to establish the church hierarchy.

After the arrival of the clergy from Greece, the residents of the capital were baptized in the Mtkvari River, which flows through Mtskheta, the capital of Kartli.³¹

This period of King Mirian's reign is full of events which are very important for Georgia's cultural history. Two churches were built during the reign of Mirian. One was wooden. It was built in the royal garden. A miraculous column was erected in it. The second church was made of stone. It was built in the outskirts of the city.³² Leonti takes the information about these occurrences from *The Conversion of Kartli*.

The *Vita* of the missionary woman was written down. Later on, this original text was included into *The Conversion of Kartli*. King Mirian's daughter-in-law, Salome of Ujarma, who according to Leonti Mroveli was daughter of the first Christian King of Armenia Trdat (286-330), compiled this proto text of Saint Nino's *Vita*.³³ It was she who collected the memories of Saint Nino's disciples, some of which were spoken at a farewell meeting in the village of Bodi. During the missionary expedition in the eastern regions of Kartli, Saint Nino, still very young, suddenly fell seriously ill and it is why she had to stay in Bodi. The noble

30 Ibidem, pp. 58-59.

31 Ibidem, p. 61.

32 *The Conversion of Kartli*, in: C.B. Lerner, *The Wellspring of Georgian Historiography*, London 2004, pp. 141, 146.

33 Leonti Mroveli, *The Lives of Georgian Kings...*, p. 44.

woman P'erozhavr of Sivnieti made another record of Saint Nino's life. This text has not survived. It was made for the dissemination of information to the Armenian provinces neighboring to Kartli.³⁴

The Vita of Saint Nino is indeed an outstanding text; it represents ideology of Georgian ethnic election³⁵ and through this narrative, one can follow the process of Georgian identity development in the epoch of religious conversion.³⁶ The kernel of this ideology is the Lord's Robe interred in Mtskheta, which was cited here as an argument that the Lord has a special attitude towards Georgians, that Kartli is the very place where the *Lord's Kingdom* or *New Jerusalem* would be established after the transformation of the World. We cannot say whether Mirian was the sole creator of this ideology, but it is clear that he should be main contributor of the *Mtskheta - New Jerusalem* project.³⁷ This ideology became the main pillar of Georgian identity for the following centuries.

Kartli became part of the Christian oikumene with a corresponding ideology: right away Georgians begun considering themselves as inhabitants of the sacral center of the globe and later on as guardians of the Christianized world from its easternmost side. The messianic idea of electivity filled Georgian culture with a new content and added to the Georgian ethnic identity's profile (shaped long before the Christian era) salient strokes. The new habitus of the Georgians constructed in the epoch of religious conversion appeared to be so powerful and potent that some elements of it continue to be active in modern Georgian national identity narratives. Thus, the victorious Iranian played a special role in the history of Georgia and in the formation of Georgian identity.

EPILOGUE

This particular story, which is very interesting in itself, appeared to be thought-provoking for more general discussions. It clearly shows that a political defeat does not always mean a final defeat, nor is a political victory

34 მ.ჩხარტიშვილი. ქართლში ქრისტიანობის სახელმწიფო რელიგიად გამოცხადების ისტორიისუცნობი დეტალები (პეროჟავრ სივნიელი), „ქართული წყაროთმცოდნეობა“ 19/20 (2017/2018), გვ. 248–265 [M. Chkhartishvili, *Some Unknown Facts of Christianity Adoption in Kartli Kingdom. Perozhavr of Sivnieti*, “Georgian Source-Studies” 19/20 (2017/2018), pp. 248–265].

35 M. Chkhartishvili, *Forging Georgian identity. Ideology of Ethnic Election*, “Caucasiologic Papers” 1 (2009), pp. 386–391.

36 მ.ჩხარტიშვილი, ქართული ეთნიკ რელიგიური მოქცევის ეპოქაში, თბილისი 2009 [M. Chkhartishvili, *Georgian Ethnic in the Epoch of Religious Conversion*, Tbilisi 2009].

37 М. Чхартишвили, Мцхета как Новый Иерусалим: Иеротопия «Жития св. Нино», in: *Новые Иерусалимы. Иеротопия и иконография сакральных пространств*, ed. А.М. Лидов, Москва 2009, pp. 131–150.

a final victory. The interrelation between the winner and the loser also does not always fit into one and the same scheme.

The Caucasus and, in particular, Georgia, has been a crossroads of cultures and a crossroads of empires since ancient times. United Georgian kingdoms or any of individual Georgian petty kingdoms or principalities had permanently been the objects of attacks by these empires, and not infrequently; Georgia had even become the battlefield of opposing empires. Because of the expansionist policy of the neighboring empires, the Georgian political units sometimes became parts of the empires, and sometimes spheres of their political and cultural influences. The mentioned circumstance left its mark on the process of forming the political map of the Georgian realm and its ethno-cultural profile. Cultural impulses are particularly interesting, because the great cultural resources distinguished the empires with which Georgian political units had relations over the centuries, in addition to their great military potentials, as well. The cultural exchange was not infrequently bilateral. Georgians were often quite widely represented in the political and cultural elites of foreign empires.

Thus, over the course of history, which is actually nothing but a prolonged chain of narratives about conflicts, it is not at all easy to identify who are the winners and who are the losers. Many factors make it difficult to reach deep insights concerning the complicated interrelations between victors and vanquished. Among them are meta-scientific ones: the modern world order is an order of nations. Nation-states make the political climate in today's world, and this happens despite the full-scale unfolding of the globalization process, the intensive and permanent emergence of transnational corporations, and the ever-increasing elimination of national partitions. Therefore, national historiographies, especially of those peoples whose nationhood formed within the empires, tend to cast a very negative light on the impetus of empires and often ignore altogether the issue of whether objectively there was anything positive in the fact that their native political units were constituent parts of empires at a certain period. After all, most of the existing national identities are nothing but responses of the vanquished to the challenges of the victors.

The incompatibility of the ideals of the nation-state with the principles and ideals of the empire³⁸ creates obstacles for deep understanding of the issue in question. The social background of what has been preserved from the imperial legacy, or why one particular cultural element has been preserved, is also not properly studied.

38 A. Benoist, *The Idea of Empire*, "Telos" (1993/1994), pp. 98-99; A. Dialla, *Between Nation and Empire: Revisiting the Russian Past Twenty Years Later*, "Historein" 13 (2013), pp. 18-38; <https://doi.org/10.12681/historein.184>

The case I have chosen as the main research target of this paper is convenient for the study of many mutually connected issues, among them of the relations between vanquished and victors, between controlling state and client state. The chronological distance from the historical fact to the observer, is quite long, and Iran is no longer an empire, and Georgia is no longer its subordinate political unit. Thanks to these factors, an unbiased representation of the past is possible.

Finally, how to answer the question posed in the title of this paper? Who is a victor; the all-powerful Sasanian Empire or the tiny Georgian state at its edge? What does the story of Mirian teach us?

As shown above, the answer requires considering the topic over the *longue durée* and in the particular context.

ABSTRACT

Human history is actually nothing but a prolonged chain of narratives about conflicts. Historians always paid much attention to their representations; however, the interrelations between vanquisher and vanquished were addressed relatively rarely. In the article, this topic is approached through the Georgian experience. The sources for all periods of Georgian history contain huge number of facts relevant for studying the issue in question. However, this time just one particular case has been selected. In particular, the article familiarizes the readers with the fascinating story of an Iranian prince, who in the first half of the 4th century, at the age of seven, took the royal throne of the pre-modern Georgian polity of Kartli. In the early 330s, while he was active, Christianity became the official religion of Kartli. This was a crucial turn in Georgian history. The name of this prince was Mirian (Mirean). He was the son of the third Sasanian Shahanshah, Hormizd I. The promotion of the Sasanian prince to the royal throne of Kartli should have been very beneficial to Iran. Sasanian authorities evidently planned to use it for further strengthening their positions in Kartli, and the South Caucasus as a whole. However, the result appeared to be the contrary: Kartli, under the leadership of the King Mirian, managed to leave the Sasanian political orbit and join to the *Byzantine Commonwealth*. Kartli became part of the Christian oikumene with a corresponding ideology; right away Georgians begun considering themselves as inhabitants of the sacral center of the globe and later on as guardians of the Christianized world from its easternmost side. The messianic idea of electivity filled Georgian culture with a new content and added to the Georgian ethnic identity's profile (shaped long before the Christian era). The new habitus of the Georgians constructed in the epoch of religious conversion appeared to be so powerful and potent that some elements of it continue to be active in modern Georgian national identity narratives. Thus, the victorious side played a positive role in the history of the vanquished. The analyzed case clearly shows that a political defeat does not always mean a final defeat, nor is a political victory a final victory. For the proper conclusions it is necessary to take a panoramic view and a *longue durée* perspective.

Keywords: Victors and Vanquished, Georgia in Late Antiquity, Sasanian Iran

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HOW TO NARRATE THE DEFEAT OF YOUR PEOPLE: CHARLEMAGNE'S CONQUEST OF THE SAXONS IN HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS FROM THE TERRITORY OF SAXONY: MID 9TH CENTURY - EARLY 11TH CENTURY



Paul the Deacon, a patriot of Lombard traditions, concluded his work on the history of the Lombards shortly after the death of King Liutprand, thus omitting any description of the wars waged by Liutprand's successors against the Franks which ended in defeat and the ultimate collapse of the kingdom, which had been conquered by Charlemagne in 773-774. Paul, associated with the courts of the Lombard kings, Liutprand and Ratchis, as well as Duke of Benevento Arechis II, eventually found himself at the court of Charlemagne where he stayed for a few years (781-785). His biography itself suggests that, sooner or later, he came to terms with the political disaster of the kingdom.¹ Furthermore, nothing in his writings proves his "rebellious" attitude. It is difficult to speculate about the feelings that accompanied him during the decades of his life after the fall of the Pavian Kingdom. Psychologizing is one of the temptations that contemporary historians functioning in contemporary paradigms must firmly avoid. Nevertheless, Paul can be regarded as an example of an intellectual, a member of the elite of his people, who endured defeat and had to not only adjust his career accordingly but also come to terms with it in himself.

¹ Paul's Life and how it was reflected in his work, *cf., i.a.,* W. Goffart, *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550-800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon*, Princeton 1988, pp. 333-347.

Working the failure through constituted a task that went beyond an individual situation or involved a particular individual, it encompassed the elites of peoples who found themselves in a critical condition. In subsequent generations, the Lombards were to live with the memory of defeat and incorporate it into their changing identity. The complexity of the situation in Upper Italy makes it difficult to follow these processes. However, an analogous case, the example concerning the Saxons, can be studied due to the smaller number of disruptive factors. Further in the text, an analysis of historiographic accounts of their lost wars with Charlemagne (recorded in different sources from the 9th, 10th, and early 11th centuries) will be presented. It was during this period that the canon of narrating these events was definitively shaped, from which later historiography drew - until the birth of scientific historiography.²

The Saxon wars of Charlemagne from 772 to 804, from a military and political perspective, ended with a decisive and complete victory for the Frankish ruler, hence the defeated Saxons became part of a new imperial order. The loss of political independence was accompanied by the imposition of a change of religion. Christianization, as in other cases, occurred gradually, but all its most outward symbols and pillars promptly appeared in the cultural landscape of the Saxon lands. It is no exaggeration to call it a cultural conquest. Despite all the atrocities of Charlemagne's wars, well-documented in the historiography flourishing under his patronage (the infamous massacre at Verden in 782), no extermination or expulsion of the entire *ethnos* (ethnic group) took place. Rather, the descendants of the defeated were to live permanently in a new reality and carry the memory of the defeat on multiple levels. A process of assimilation was required in this situation.

The subject of the following considerations will be how this process of assimilation took place in the narratives created in Saxony between the mid 9th and the early 11th centuries. Initially, the theme appeared in hagiographic texts. Different (hypothetical) patrons and various additional purposes for writing - apart from the primary one, *i.e.*, glorifying a saint - determined the way they spoke about Charlemagne and his victory over the Saxons. Later, authors tackled the subject primarily focusing on history: the anonymous *Poeta Saxo* at the end

2 Cf. H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege Karls des Großen in der Geschichtsschreibung der Karolinger- und Ottonenzeit*, Berlin 1937, pp. 91-92. The same topic - the way of presenting Charlemagne's wars with the Saxons based on the same examples - is discussed in the work that is now much more frequently cited than Mühlner's work: H. Beumann, *Die Hagiographie "bewältigt". Unterwerfung und Christianisierung der Sachsen durch Karl den Großen*, in: *Christianizzazione ed organizzazione ecclesiastica delle campagne nell'altomedioevo: espansione e resistenze*, Spoleto 1982 (= *Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* 28), pp. 129-163; reprint in: H. Beumann, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze aus den Jahren 1966-1986*, ed. J. Petersohn, R. Schmidt, Sigmaringen 1987, pp. 289-323, quoted below with pagination from the reprint.

of the 9th century and Widukind of Corvey in the times of Otto I. The assumption of the throne in the East Frankish kingdom by the Saxon, Liudolfing, family significantly influenced the way of writing about the traumatic historical event, the effects of which proved to be so permanent. It can be seen in the works of Widukind and other authors contemporary to him or shortly thereafter, such as the creators of the lives of Queen Matilda. Their narratives will also be included in the analysis below. The less obvious but justifiable final points in the present analysis will be the texts of Bruno of Querfurt and Thietmar of Merseburg. The references to Charlemagne's wars with the Saxons are incidental in their writings; however, they also document that the process of assimilating the stories of the wars and the associated Christianization had indeed already occurred.

It should be emphasized here that within the scope of this article, a position distant from essentialism is adopted in approaching the issue of ethnic and national identities which are not treated as something given and unchanging, but rather as evolving through long-term and complex processes, in different epochs and encompassing various circles.³ For the era covered by the study, it is prudent and rational to discuss identity and reflections related to it within the context of the social and educated elite - for Saxony in the 9th and 10th centuries, this group obviously constituted an insignificant minority of the population. However, this minority not only produced testimonies that shaped our ideas about those times but also prepared the mental environment that was to gradually affect larger groups over time.

The foreign conquest of a community that is at an advanced stage of shaping its elites and building a supra-local sense of identity within them gives rise to attitudes that can be identified at two poles as well as a continuum of less consistent attitudes between them. This is best illustrated through distinct, relatively contemporary, examples. In Polish society during the era of partitions, there were active proponents of open or covert rebellion, however, there were also those who were ready to adapt and fully reconcile with the "judgment of history". In Ukrainian society at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries, to provide a more recent example, apart from those involved in defending independence and separate identity, there were, and still are, those who accept being part of the "Russian world", embracing all the economic, cultural, and civilizational consequences of Ukraine's inclusion in Russia. For earlier epochs, the difference is often that only one voice or group of voices reaches us, which is why we treat the dispute over the defeat of our nation and its consequences

3 Reflection on these topics in the humanities has already generated numerous volumes. Benedict Anderson's work, focused on modern times, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), can be recommended as only a starting point for considerations.

as settled at the dawn of time, or we assume that it did not take place at all. Unless one adopts the perspective of specialists who can delve into sources presenting various points of view, the prevailing narrative in societies tends to carry such a one-sided vision. An example of this could be a specific approach to the Turkish conquest in the Serbian historical consciousness, with the central point being the Kosovo myth.

In the historical cases mentioned above, the narrative of rebellion proved to be victorious. The conquest was rejected and acknowledged as a dark intermezzo of native history, as ultimately its political and cultural consequences were annihilated or overcome. Where such a reversal did not take place, it opened the field for adaptation, which meant recognizing the defeat of one's community as a historically necessary event, thus ultimately just, fair, and bringing good results. For instance, how could the Romanized descendants of the Gauls or the Celtiberians, conquered by the Romans, belonging to an educated elite, cultivating traditions that had not only a general imperial character but also a local component, were to accept, contemplate, and retell the story of a war that killed their ancestors but culturally shaped them? They considered themselves part of the Roman order and civilization, although they were aware of the fact that this order and civilization were imposed upon them. The stability of this political order and the benefits it brought seemed to confirm the historical correctness of Roman policies. This being so, did the defeated Vercingetorix, the most famous leader in the struggles against Julius Caesar, become an outlander? Or maybe his place was on the ash heap of history?

Similar questions resurfaced in completely different historical conditions, for example, when the powerful France of the times of Louis XIV and Louis XV, already a country combining a rich tradition with aspirations, referred through the writings of its intellectual elite to the issue of its roots—whether they were Germanic, Roman, or Gallo-Roman. In the midst of the debate between “Germanists” and “Romanists”, the focus was on the Franks who could have been seen as new conquerors but also as successors of the Romans.⁴ The question about the Roman conquest, however, found a not entirely humorous or mocking development in contemporary popular culture, particularly in the comic book series “Asterix and Obelix” created by French authors. The series gained immense popularity outside France, and what is more, the films based on the comics achieved a huge commercial success.⁵

4 More about this historiographical, several-centuries-old discussion in, *i.a.*, C. Nicolet, *La Fabrique d'une nation : La France entre Rome et les Germains*, Paris 2003.

5 Cf., e.g., A.C. King, *Vercingetorix, Asterix and the Gauls: the use of Gallic national symbols in 19th- and 20th-century French politics and culture*, in: *Images of Rome. Perceptions of Ancient Rome in Europe and the United States in the Modern Age*, ed. R. Hingley (Journal of Roman Archaeology. Supplementa 44), pp. 113-125 or Giuseppe Pucci, *Caesar the foe: Roman conquest and national resistance in French popular culture*, in: *Julius Caesar in western culture*, ed. M. Wyke, Malden 2006, pp. 190-201.

The Saxons of the generations after the victory of Charlemagne found themselves in a similar situation to the Gauls. They assimilated the culture and values of the conquerors, knowing that all this was imposed on them by force, with great bloodshed. Their elite - reconciled with the historical fate - made careers in the country ruled by the descendants of Charlemagne. The Saxon aristocracy benefited from the policy of the victors at the expense of the *frilinga* and the *lazzi*, the two lower strata of Saxon society. The frustration of the latter in the years 841-842 in connection with the fighting between the Carolingians found expression in the so-called Stelling uprising.⁶ The local nobles also integrated with the Frankish ones in the aspect of cultivated forms of religious life - as evidenced by Hedwig Röckelein's study on the translating relics to Saxony.⁷ As early as the 9th century, the Saxon aristocracy somehow competed with Carolingian rulers and bishops of local dioceses in establishing monasteries.⁸

The Saxons found themselves on a path that allowed them to accept a not so paradoxical self-identity: "We are Saxons and at the same time Franks", which means: we are pillars of the Frankish kingdom, members of the greater Frankish community - just as the descendants of Gallic opponents of Caesar once adopted a Roman identity as superior. This might have been Charlemagne's intention during his conquest if we consider expressions used by his biographer Einhard as reflecting the emperor's authentic approach: "et Francis adunati [Saxones] unus cum eis populus efficerentur".⁹ Attitudes

6 On the processes of transformation of awareness taking place in the Saxon elites after the conquest of the land cf., M. Becher, *Volksbildung und Herzogtum in Sachsen während des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts*, "Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung" 108 (2000), pp. 67-84. On the Stelling uprising from the 40s of the ninth century, see, i.a., E.J. Goldberg, *Popular Revolt, Dynastic Politics, and Aristocratic Factionalism in the Early Middle Ages: The Saxon Stellinga Reconsidered*, "Speculum" 70 (1995), 3, pp. 467-501; also: C. Ehlers, *Die Integration Sachsens 750-1024*, Göttingen 2007, pp. 258-263. On the specifics of the Christianization of Saxony see also, i.a., H.-D. Kahl, *Randbemerkung zur Christianisierung der Sachsen*, in: *Die Eingliederung der Sachsen in das Frankenreich*, ed. W. Lammers, Darmstadt 1970, pp. 502-526.

7 H. Röckelein, *Reliquientranslationen nach Sachsen im 9. Jahrhundert. Über Kommunikation, Mobilität und Öffentlichkeit im Frühmittelalter*, Stuttgart 2002.

8 See examples in: Ch. Carroll, *The bishoprics of Saxony in the first century after Christianization*, "Early Medieval Europe" 8 (1999), pp. 225-227. Consequently, as the author emphasizes, the Saxon bishoprics, which were mediocally endowed by the rulers and therefore rather insignificant in the 9th century, could no longer count on the generosity of the local elite. See a useful overview of academic discussions on the topic of integration of the Saxons into the Frankish world: I. Rembold, *Quasi una gens: Saxony and the Frankish world 772-988*, "History Compass" 15 (2017), 6, pp. 1-14.

9 Einhard, *Vita Karoli magni*. ed. O. Holder-Egger, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores rerum Germanicarum 25, Hannover 1911, p. 10. A complete quote, referring to the conditions for ending the war, reads: "Eaque conditione a rege proposita et ab illis [sc. the Saxons] suscepta tractum per totannos bellum constat esse finitum, ut, abiecto daemonum cultu et relictis patriis caerimoniis, Christianae fidei atque religionis sacramenta susciperent et Francis adunati unus cum eis populus efficerentur".

among the Franks were also evolving. Just as during times of conflict, Frankish historiography developed the theme of the *gens perfida*, the treacherous Saxon people, later on, another perspective gained importance: the Saxons as the most recent group joining the *populus Christianus*.¹⁰ The quoted passage from Einhard is significant in this respect. The word *populus* appears in it, which the author, inspired by the models of classical literature, endowed with positive associations, in contrast to *nationes* which, according to that tradition, could denote barbarians.¹¹ From Einhard onwards, the intellectual process of creating unity between former enemies began.¹²

In the 9th century, traces of reflection on the suffered defeat could be found among the Saxons. However, such reflections were not present in chronicles or annals, as texts of this kind were not produced in the area at that time. In the East Frankish kingdom, the monasteries of the Rhineland dominated the field of historiographical activity. In turn, although we can find individuals from Saxony among the intellectuals of the era, they pursued their careers at the court and within the ecclesiastical structures in other parts of the country. From the perspective of the Carolingian elites, Saxony remained a peripheral province. The most famous heterodox theologian of this century (or, to put it simply, the most significant heretic), Gottschalk, left behind no traces of historiosophical reflection. This theme was also not addressed in the vernacular poems, *Heliand*, and *Genesis*, which were probably created in the monastery of Fulda, or in the Saxon foundations such as Corvey or Werden. Both works presented the content of the New and Old Testament,¹³ respectively.

However, the Saxon authors did confront the historical trauma in the accounts of the transfer of the relics. The demand for such texts, as well as for the translation of the relics itself, was reinforced by a peculiar paradox in Saxon circumstances: the region did not have its own saints, not

10 This is how Frankish historiography on the wars with the Saxons is presented and interpreted - as stretched between these two poles - is shown by Robert Flierman in *Saxon Identities, AD 150–900*, London etc. 2019, pp. 93–117. Cf. E. Shuler, *The Saxons within Carolingian Christendom: Post-Conquest Identity in the Translationes of Vitus, Pusinna and Liborius*, "Journal of Medieval History" 36 (2010), p. 44.

11 R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, p. 115.

12 With regard to the phrase quoted above, the evolution in successive authors was studied by H. Beumann, *Einhard und die karolingische Tradition in ottonischen Corvey*, "Westfalen" 30 (1952) pp. 158 ff.; see also M. Becher, *Rex, Dux und Gens. Untersuchungen zur Entstehung des sächsischen Herzogtums im 9. und 10. Jahrhundert*, Husum 1996, pp. 41–43.

13 The latest work on Gottschalk: D. Müller, *Wie entsteht Häresie? Der Fall des Gottschalk von Orbais und die Konsequenzen*, in: "Über den Gebrauch der Vernunft". *Theologie, Philosophie und Kunst im Zentrum Europas um 1000*, ed. V. Gallé, Worms 2020, pp. 89–107. On *Heliand* and *Genesius*, i.a., W. Haubrichs, *Heliand und Altsächsische Genesis*, in: *Reallexikon der Germanischen Altertumskunde*, 2nd ed., Bd. 14, Berlin-New York 1999, pp. 297–308.

even local missionaries-martyrs, who would have died there for the faith during the 8th and 9th centuries.¹⁴

Shortly after the mid 9th century, a monk from Fulda, Rudolf, the head of the local monastery school, engaged in writing *Translatio sancti Alexandri*.¹⁵ The Saxon count Waltbert (Waltbrath), responsible for the donation of this saint's relics to Wildeshausen monastery, subsequently commissioned the writing of the book to Rudolf. Waltbert was the grandson of Widukind, whom Frankish historiography portrayed as the main leader of the rebellious Saxons until his surrender and baptism in the year 785.¹⁶ Rudolf passed away before the work was completed, and the subsequent chapters were added by his disciple Meginhart. For unknown reasons, Waltbert assigned the task to the monks from the abbey of Fulda, located outside Saxony, which was interested in the conversion of the Saxons, although he could have found authors in Saxon ecclesiastical institutions, such as the monasteries of Corvey, Werden, or the circle of the cathedral school in Paderborn. In any case, the extensive treatment of the Saxon past in the work (particularly in the part written by Rudolf) is assumed to have reflected the intention of the patron or his circle.

Rudolf knew and made use of the life of Charlemagne written by Einhard. He drew from it, for example, the phrase quoted above about the postulated union of the Franks and the Saxons, stating that it had already taken place in his time.¹⁷ Rudolf introduced the theme of earlier cooperation between the Saxons and the Franks, just at a key moment in the history of the former.

14 Cf. I. Wood, *An Absence of Saints? The Evidence for Christianisation of Saxony*, in: *Am Vorabend der Kaiserkrönung. Das Epos "Karolus Magnus et Leo papa" und Papstbesuch in Paderborn*, ed. P. Godman, Berlin 2002, pp. 335-350.

15 Edition: *Translatio s. Alexandri auctoribus Ruodolfo et Meginharto*, ed. G.H. Pertz, in: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores* (further: MGH SS) 2, Hannover 1829, pp. 674-681.

16 On *Translatio S. Alexandri*, and its conclusions regarding the Widukind family cf. K. Schmid, *Die Nachfahren Widukinds*, "Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters" 20 (1964), pp. 2 ff. On the account see also: R. Michałowski, *Chrystianizacja Saksonii*, in: *Chrystianizacja „Młodszej Europy"*, ed. J. Dobosz, J. Strzelczyk, M. Matla, Poznań 2017, pp. 24-28. On Rudolf's presentation of Widukind's story see: E. Freise, *Widukind in Attigny. Taufpatronat und Treueidleistung als Ziele der sächsischen Untwerwungs- und Missionskriege Karls des Großen*, in: *1200 Jahre Widukinds Taufe*, ed. G. Kaldewei, Paderborn 1985, pp. 16-17.

17 *Translatio s. Alexandri*, c. 3, p. 676: "Post haec susceptis predicatoribus Veritatis episcopis atque presbiteris, imbuti verae fidei sacramentis, baptisati sunt in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti ac crescente fide ac vera religione, adunati sunt populo Dei usque in hodiernum diem". The interpretation of the statements by Einhard and Rudolf - S. Kaschke, *Sachsen, Franken und die Nachfolgeregelung Ludwigs des Deutschen: unus cum eis populus efficerentur?*, "Niedersächsisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte" 79 (2007), pp. 152 ff. - the author warns against assigning exaggerated meaning to these statements and counterpoints them with examples from the historiography of the 9th century showing the persistent distinctiveness and alienation between the Franks and the Saxons.

He recounted the tradition according to which the Frankish king Theodoric, during his difficult war with the Thuringians, sought help from the Saxons, who had recently arrived from Britain at the shores of Germania, and offered them Thuringian lands as a reward. After the joint victory, the Frankish king indeed granted the conquered land to his allies.¹⁸ The tone of this story is clear: it was to the Frankish king that the Saxons owed the land that was to become their homeland.¹⁹ Rudolf's narrative effectively served to reject the aspirations of Saxon independence, acknowledging their subordinate position to the Franks as it was established at the onset of their history. The alleged ancient alliance already placed the Saxons among civilized peoples - under Frankish leadership. Since the friendship and cooperation between the Saxons and the Franks was so long, the resistance of the former against Charlemagne was seen as an act of treason, regardless of the apostasy aspect.²⁰

This interpretation of history determined the image of the Saxons in the period before their Christianization. In Rudolf's and Meginhard's accounts (Meginhard continued Rudolf's work), they were portrayed as brutal and untrustworthy pagans in need of Frankish rule and protection, they had to be won over for the new faith by force - first with arms, and then with the power of relics.²¹

Rudolf acted consistently when writing about his patron's grandfather. First, he noted that Widukind was distinguished by noble descent and wealth, but then described him as an instigator and tireless promoter of treason and multiple cases of the Saxons' disobedience. Nevertheless, it was of Widukind's own free will that he was to be baptized in Attigny, in the presence of King Charlemagne.²² For the hagiographer, treason and

18 *Translatio s. Alexandri*, c. 1, pp. 674-675. The analysis of the fragments in: H. Weddige, *Heldensage und Stammessage. Iring und der Untergang des Thüringerreiches in Historiographie und heroischer Dichtung*, Tübingen 1989, pp. 18-23.

19 Cf. M. Becher, *Volksbildung...*, p. 74. On the image of Saxon history in texts written under Carolingian rule cf. R. Corradini, *Überlegungen zur sächsischen Ethnogenese anhand der Annales Fuldenses und deren sächsisch-ottonischer Rezeption*, in: *Die Suchenach den Ursprüngen. Von der Bedeutung des frühen Mittelalters*, ed. W. Pohl, Wien 2004, pp. 211-231; Ph. Depreux, *La sublimation de la soumission des Saxons au pouvoir franc et la translation de saint Alexandre de Rome à Wildeshausen (851)*, in: *Faire l'événement au Moyen Âge*, ed. C. Carozzi, H. Taviani-Carozzi, Aix-en-Provence 2007, pp. 219-234; M. Springer, *Sage und Geschichte um das alte Sachsen*, "Westfälische Zeitschrift" 146 (1996), pp. 198-199; H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, p. 64.

20 E. Shuler, *The Saxons...*, p. 44.

21 *Ibidem*, pp. 44-45.

22 *Translatio s. Alexandri*, c. 3, p. 676: "Witukind quoque, qui inter eos et claritate generis et opum amplitudine eminebat, et qui perfidiae atque multimodae defectionis auctor et indefessus erat incentor, ad fidem Karoli sua sponte veniens Attiniaci baptizatus et a rege de fontibus acro susceptus est, et Saxonia tota subacta".

defection are violations of the proper order. Widukind is not punished for them, but his conversion is seen as a kind of, or perhaps a prelude to, atonement. The point of view here can be described as Frankish or imperial. This is evidenced through the repetition of nearly all of Einhard's arguments justifying the war. Widukind's character is not depicted as heroic but seen as rather subject to temporary demonization.

The portrayal of Widukind takes a different turn in the third version of *Vita Liudgeri*, the work contemporary to Rudolf and Meginhard, written shortly after the year 864 in the Werden monastery. Widukind appears there as a leader of the Saxons who, after a victorious war with the Frisians, led his people to apostasy from the Church (the Frisians are more important than the Saxons in this text, due to the missionary activities of Liudger, relating to the events dated back to the year 784). And yet, the monastic author referred to him as a man renowned for his wisdom, eloquence, and military achievements, ranking him among the best princes.²³ On the other hand, the oldest version of *Vita Liudgeri*, written by a relative of the saint, Altfred, cast rhetorical thunderbolts at Widukind, seeing him as the root of evil, the cause of the Saxon and Frisian schism.²⁴

The "Frankocentrism" of Rudolf's perspective, or perhaps, as Philippe Depreux put it, an irenic view of the incorporation of the Saxons into the Frankish world,²⁵ is not surprising. The author was a monk associated with the Carolingian abbey in Fulda, and his patron, in spite of being a grandson of a rebel, integrated remarkably well as a member of the aristocratic elite during the time of Emperor Lothair and King Louis the German. At the same time, for the Frankish side, it was still possible to metaphorically reopen Saxon wounds, *i.e.*, at the level of memory. Hrabanus Maurus, who later became the abbot of Fulda, the Archbishop of Mainz, and one of the leading figures in intellectual life in the mid 9th century, in a treatise written around 819, stigmatized the alleged pride of the Saxons and emphasized in strong words the Frankish superiority over them: precedence

23 *Vita tertia sancti Liudgeri*, in: *Die Vitae Sancti Liudgeri*, ed. W. Diekamp, in: *Geschichtsquellen des Bisthums Münster* 4, Münster 1881 (it is not a complete edition), I, c. 18, p. 95: "Ea tempestate dux Saxonum Widikindus erat, vir etsi paganus et sapientiae fama et loquentiae splendore et bellorum exercitiis non inmerito inter optimos duces numerandus. Eo duce Frisiam aggressi Saxones et aecclesias incenderunt et Dei famulus expulerunt et cuncta caedibus, incendiis et rapinis complentes".

24 *Alfridi vita s. Liudgeri* [I], c. 21, in: *Die Vitae Sancti Liudgeri*, pp. 24-25; cf. H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, p. 56. The second *Vita* omitted much of this information, as well as Altfred's interpretation - H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, p. 57. On Liudger's lives, cf. recent work by Ingrid Rembold, *Rewriting the founder, Werden on the Ruhr and the uses of hagiography*, "Journal of Medieval History" 41 (2015), 4, pp. 363-387, including also data on the third biography - pp. 377 ff.

25 Ph. Depreux, *La sublimation...*, p. 221.

in accepting Christianity as well as in military and political supremacy.²⁶ This same writer used the Saxon origins of the aforementioned Gottschalk to launch attacks against him.²⁷ The Saxon aristocracy, facing similar views, probably looked for some form of a defensive strategy. Rudolf's text, consulted with his patron, could have been an example of this strategy. Hence, in the first chapters of the work, there was a discourse on the purity of customs and the glorious character of their laws in pagan times - when they lacked only knowledge of the Creator and worship of Him to be happy.²⁸ It is also worth noting that Rudolf drew material from Tacitus' *Germania* and attributed to the Saxons what the Roman author assigned to the Germans, although the Saxons did not appear in Tacitus's narrative.²⁹

And it was this version of history that served as a proposal addressed to a wider group of the Saxon aristocracy - recommending to them how to see the roles of Charles, his opponents, and the war between them. The later historiographical tradition also included the view that resistance from the Saxons ceased with Widukind's baptism, however it is clearly contradicted by the events depicted in the Frankish annals of the time.

Over the course of the 9th century, further gestures and texts appeared, suggesting overcoming the memories of the bloody war.³⁰ Then, one only needed to skillfully talk about it or artfully remain silent about it.

With full approval for what happened during the reign of Charlemagne, an anonymous monk from the Saxon monastery of Corvey wrote a narrative about translating the relics of Saint Vitus from Saint-Denis to his native abbey, which was compiled about the 60s or 70s of the 9th century. Although Corvey was located on Saxon lands, nothing in the text indicated the origin of the author. An attractive hypothesis by the editor of the work, Irene Schmale-Ott, based on linguistic nuances and the knowledge revealed by the narrator, suggests that the author was a Saxon who, in his childhood, was brought to the Frankish country, possibly as a hostage, was educated

26 Raban Maur, *De oblatione puerorum*, Patrologia Latina 107, ed. J.-P. Migne, Paris 1864, col. 432 A-B: "Quis enim ignorat sub hac plaga mundi habitans, Francos ante Saxones in Christi fide atque religione fuisse, quos ipsi postmodum suae dominationi subegerunt armis, atque superiores effecti, dominorum ritu, imo magis paterno affectu, ab idolorum cultu abstrahentes, ad fidem Christi converterunt?"

27 E. Shuler, *The Saxons...*, p. 42.

28 *Translatio s. Alexandri*, c. 2, p. 675: "Et multa utilia atque secundum legem naturae honesta in morum probitate habere studuerunt, quae eis ad veram beatitudinem promerendam proficere potuissent, si ignorantiam creatoris sui non haberent, et a veritate culturae illius non essent alieni".

29 Ibidem, c. 1-2, p. 675.

30 Cf. K.H. Krüger, *Die älteren Sachsen als Franken. Zum Besuch des Kaisers Arnulf 889 im Kloster Corvey*, "Westfälische Zeitschrift" 151/152 (2001/2002), pp. 225-244.

there, later became a monk in Corbie, and when the Saxon branch was established, he returned to his homeland around 822 as one of the first monks of the new monastery.³¹ However, this remains only a hypothesis.

The narrative, particularly in the first three chapters that interest us here, shows that the idea of bringing faith to Saxony and the triumph of Christ was very important to the anonymous writer, it primarily depended on the actions of Charlemagne.³² According to the author, the Saxon people rebelled against the Franks, and the mighty Charlemagne not only conquered them but also subjected them to the Christian faith.³³ The ruler was victorious because he pursued a religious objective. Unlike, e.g., Einhard, the hagiographer did not emphasize the uniqueness of the wars with the Saxons, suggesting that they became one of the peoples converted through Charlemagne's efforts. Their conversion was the implementation of God's will, an element of Christ's triumphant march that successively encompassed Romans, Franks, and Saxons. This approach pushes the bloody aspects of the events during the time of Charlemagne to the background.

Charlemagne's sending monks and priests to Saxony, as described by the hagiographer, was part of a grand plan that encompassed the whole world. Charlemagne was to do this after calling a council when God had already granted him peace from all enemies.³⁴ As a result, the theme of the Saxons' particular stubbornness disappears. This approach, therefore, does not increase feelings of shame among the Saxons or feelings of pride among the Franks.³⁵ As Erik Shuler interpreted it, the story of the foundation of the monastery in Corvey and bringing the relics of Saint Vitus highlights the Christian zeal of the Saxons and thus portrays them as potentially equal members of the universal Christian people alongside the Franks.³⁶

31 *Translatio sancti Viti martyris/ Übertragung des hl. Märtyrers Vitus*, ed. I. Schmale-Ott, Veröffentlichung der Historischen Kommission für Westfalen 41, Fontes minores 1, Münster 1979, pp. 12-21.

32 *Translatio sancti Viti*, c. 1, p. 32: "Christo ... qui nomen suum usque in terminus universae terrae notum fieri voluit" and the author's declaration: "Qualiter denique ipsi Saxones ad fidem et agnitionem Veritatis converti potuerint, breviter in sequenti adnectere huic opusculo curavi...". Cf. H. Röckelein, *Reliquientranslationen...*, p. 104.

33 *Translatio sancti Viti*, c. 3, pp. 34, 36; cf. H. Röckelein, *Reliquientranslationen...*, pp. 100-108.

34 *Translatio sancti Viti*, c. 3, pp. 34, 36: "Cum autem requiem praestitisset ei Dominus a compluribus inimicis suis [Charles] convocavit omnes, qui sub ditione suo errant maiores, sacerdotes et principes, atque studiosissime quaeavit quomodo veram fidem que religione in universe regno suo confirmaret". Cf. E. Shuler, *The Saxons...*, p. 46.

35 E. Shuler, *The Saxons...*, p. 45; R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, pp. 140-142.

36 D.F. Appleby, *Spiritual Progress in Carolingian Saxony: A Case from Ninth Century Corvey*, "Catholic Historical Review" 82 (1996), pp. 600 ff.; E. Shuler, *The Saxons...*, p. 46.

However, this was not the only possible interpretation. Another text to be mentioned in this context is the *Translatio s. Liborii*. It was written at the request of Bishop Biso of Paderborn, who governed the diocese located in Westphalia, one of the three regions in the Saxon territory, between 887 and 909.³⁷ The anonymous author begins the narrative about the transfer of Liborius' relics from the perspective of Charlemagne. The story revolves around his very long war with the Saxons, with various battle events. The emperor defeated the Saxons and made them Christians, while also expanding his realm. Furthermore, he was more concerned with spreading the faith than expanding his kingdom. After the war, he went to great lengths to steer them away from demon worship,³⁸ as the Saxons had long remained a people with little advancement in accepting the faith ("rudis adhuc in fide populus").

On the other hand, the most intriguing aspect is when the author refers to Charlemagne, upon mentioning his death, as "our apostle" (the author identifies himself as a Saxon in this and other places), who, in order to open the gates of faith to the Saxons, taught them with an iron tongue.³⁹ The connotations of iron may not have been positive - it is worth referring to the Bible recalling the iron yoke in Jeremiah. However, in the vision in the Apocalypse of John, the Messiah, a Man born of a Woman,⁴⁰ will rule the nations with an iron rod. Thus, although the hagiographer praised Charlemagne's construction of churches in another part of the text, he chose to summarize his apostleship with a very clear allusion to the war. Moreover, he regarded

37 On the Liborius translation cycle, cf. H. Röckelein, *Reliquientranslationen...*, pp. 96-100. The analysis of the theme of the Saxon Wars in a text commissioned by Bishop Biso - R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, pp. 133-136.

38 *Translatio sancti Liborii*, in: V. de Vry, *Liborius -Brückenbauer Europas. Die mittelalterlichen Viten und Translationsberichte. Mit einem Anhang der Manuscripta Liboriana*, Paderborn-München-Wien-Zürich 1997, c. 2, pp. 188-189: "Et ut se magis christiana ereligionis quam regni sui dilatandi causa tantae rei difficultatem aggressum ostenderet" and: "Qua tandem partim armis, partim liberalitate, per quam maxime primorum eius animos sibi deuinxerat, superata, totum exinde suum ad hoc contulit studium, ut pro tantarum saluatione animarum populi post tot saecula cultum daemonum relinquentis fructum sui laboris ex Dei remuneratione consequeretur".

39 *Translatio sancti Liborii*, c. 7, p. 194: "Quem (sc. Charles) arbitror nostrum iure apostolum nominari; quibus (sc. Saxon people) ut ianuam fidei aperiet, ferrea quodammodo lingua praedicavit". The motif of the rank of the apostle, which, according to the author, Charles deserved, is further developed: "A quo [Christo] illum recipere praemium et confidimus et optamus, ut fruatur in caelis apostolorum consortio, quorum functus est in terris officio". The idea of Charles's apostolicity first appeared in texts of authors from the circle of his court, i.e., outside of Saxony - in *Carmen de conversione Saxonum* (the text from 777 or 778) and in Alcuin's letters - H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, p. 12. Cf. J. Ehlers, *Die Sachsenmission als heilsgeschichtliche Ereigniss*, in: *Vita Religiosa im Mittelalter. Festschrift für Kasper Elm*, ed. F.-J. Felten, N. Jaspert, Berlin 1999, pp. 41-42.

40 Jr 28,13: "catenas ligneas contrivisti et facies pro eis **catenas ferreas**"; Ap 12,5: "Et peperit filium masculum, qui recturus erat omnes gentes in **virga ferrea**".

these events as a victory over the devil, snatching thousands of souls from him, and thus more glorious than all others.⁴¹ It must be emphasized: this was not an image from the perspective of an external conqueror, colonizer, or missionary; the author boldly acknowledged belonging to the Saxon people. For the author of this account, both the fate of the Saxons and the purpose and functioning of the Bishopric in Paderborn were equally significant.⁴²

In turn, the author from the group of monks in Corvey or the nuns from Herford, who wrote the *Translatio S. Pusinnae*,⁴³ probably between 862-875, at the request of the abbess of Herford, Haduwy, undertook an explicit glorification of the Saxon conversion process. The initial resistance was explained, without condemnation, by the fidelity to ancestral traditions, and for the success of the Christianization accomplished by Charlemagne a reason was found in the exceptional wisdom and reasonableness of the Saxon people.⁴⁴ These phrases already evoke a sense of Saxon pride, while also acknowledging what belongs to the emperor (Charlemagne). The wisdom attributed to him symmetrically reflects the virtues of the entire Saxon people in the narrative. They were also convinced to change their religion "rationibus commodis et exemplis ... argumentis et approbationibus validis". The hagiographer clearly separated the war with Charlemagne from the conversion of the Saxons.⁴⁵ The very victory of Charlemagne in the thirty-year-long battles, which took place with

41 *Translatio sancti Liborii*, c. 7, p. 194: "Qui cum tociens uictoria potitus quotiens in procinctu positus multas sibi gentes, multa regna subiecerit, constat tamen eum gloriosissime etiam de diabolo triumphasse, cui tot animarum milia prius sub eius tyrannide captiua, in conuersione nostra egentis eripuit et Christo Domino adquisiuit".

42 Cf. *Translatio sancti Liborii*, c. 7, p. 193, where the author wrote about the first bishop of Paderborn, Hathumar, that he came from "de gente nostra, hoc est saxonica". According to this passage, young Hathumar was taken hostage by the Franks and was educated in this environment. About this account, see R. Michałowski, *Chrystianizacja...*, pp. 28-29. It is worth noting that the author depicted the first bishops, Hathumar and especially Badurad, both of local Saxon origin, as model shepherds of souls.

43 Cf. H. Röckelein, *Reliquienttranslationen...*, pp. 108 ff.

44 *Translatio s. Pusinnae*, in: *Die Kaiserurkunden der Provinz Westfalen 777-1313*, vol. 1: *Die Urkunden des Karolingischen Zeitalters 777-900*, ed. R. Wilmans, Münster 1867, [c. 1], p. 541: "Nobilis et strenua, iuxtaque dotem naturae sagacissima gens Saxonum, ab antiquis etiam scriptoribus memorata, summi et gloriosissimi nostra memoria Caroli auspiciis varia sorte bellorum vix per triginta annos Deo volente subdita, verbi divini foedera, et fidem in Deum et spem beatitudinis suscepit aeternae (...). Sed illa sive duritia sive pertinacia, sive perversitas dicenda est, sive alio quo libet nomine convenientius appellanda, prudentia naturali et ingenio ad omnem subtilitatem nobilissimo et acutissimo, rationibus commodis et exemplis labefacta, post etiam argumentis et approbationibus validis, quasi quibusdam muralibus machinis, infracta et expugnata est. Neque temere dixerim nationem aliquam bono solertiae et ingenita sibi subtilitate magis illa callere"; cf. interpretation in: H. Mayr-Harting, *Charlemagne, the Saxons, and the Imperial Coronation of 800*, "The English Historical Review" 111 (1996), issue 444, p. 1129.

45 H. Beumann, *Die Hagiographie...*, p. 317.

varying fortunes of war (“*varia sorte bellorum*”), happened by the will of God. The text indirectly addressed traditional Frankish accusations of Saxon disloyalty. The justification for the Saxons’ adherence to paganism through fidelity to ancestral traditions served to negate its significance. The text does not include descriptions of battles and slaughter. Moreover, there are hardly any Franks mentioned as a people or a political entity, nor are there any foreign missionaries; even the agency of Charlemagne himself is reduced in favor of the choice made by the Saxons.⁴⁶

It is striking that, on the way from Binson in the diocese of Châlons-sur-Marne, then in the West Frankish kingdom, to Herford in Saxony, Saint Pusinna, whose relics were being transported, did not perform any miracles, contrary to what one might expect in a text glorifying the translation. In justification of this fact the hagiographer openly stated that miracles were more necessary for non-believers than for believers. In another passage, he (or she) described the resistance of the inhabitants of the Binson region to being deprived of their relics. In doing so, the author conveyed the message that the Saxons were already mature Christians and did not need miracles, while the situation with the Franks may have been different.⁴⁷ This further intensifies the polemical character of the claims made in the anonymous work in relation to the ideas promoted in Rudolf and Meginhard’s *Translatio Alexandri*.⁴⁸

Another anonymous Saxon author, writing after 870, or even after 880, raised the theme of the conquest and conversion of the Saxons by Charlemagne in the hagiography of Liutbirga, the devout recluse from Wendhausen. While the ethnic origin of the author is rather hypothetical, the intended audience was undoubtedly Saxon: the canonesses from Wendhausen and the powerful noble family that exercised their patronage over them.⁴⁹ In the opening parts of the text, the father of Gisela, the pious patroness of titular protagonist, is mentioned. He was a Saxon noble named Hessi, who lived during the time of Charlemagne and was the leader of the tribe Ostfali. Hessi converted to the faith in 775 and later remained faithfully loyal to Charlemagne. He ended his life piously as a monk in Fulda, and

46 R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, pp. 143-144; cf. C. Ehlers, *Die Sachsenmission...*, p. 46.

47 *Translatio s. Pusinnae*, c. 11, p. 546: “Illud quoque sentire potest, quod signa magis infidelibus quam fidelibus necessaria sunt”, also c. 6, p. 544: “Quod vix a loco, in quo [Pusinna’s body] conditum fuerat ab episcopis levatum est, obstante populo, nunc precibus nunc etiam lacrymis, ne tanta amitterent eiusdem virginis patrocinia, qua se hactenus in ea habuisse non dubitabant, propter frequentiam signorum”. E. Shuler, *The Saxons...*, p. 48; R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, p. 146.

48 Cf. Appleby, *Spiritual Progress*, p. 606: this book by the author of *Translatio s. Pusinnae*, reflected his/her reservation towards the alleged “folk” enthusiasm for relics and accounts of miracles, still present in Corvey’s paternal West Frankish Corbie Abbey.

49 Cf. R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, pp. 147-149.

the hagiographer used this character to recall Charlemagne's conquest of the Saxons – the noblest and most powerful people – and their conversion achieved through various means.⁵⁰ The narration emphasized the combination of Charlemagne's efforts towards the Saxons: military exertion, prudence with ingenuity, and great offerings. Perhaps the indication that not only war, but also persuasion and gifts, led the Saxons to Christianity mitigated the sense of defeat in the political-military conflict, hence it found its place in various texts from the Saxon circle – and addressed to the Saxons themselves.⁵¹

The claims about the multifaceted actions of the emperor, including gentle persuasion, had their tradition on the Frankish side as well. A contemporary author, Egil (d. 822) from Bavaria, in his *Vita Sturmi*, wrote that Charlemagne converted most of the people (*i.e.*, the Saxons) to the Christian faith partly through wars, partly through persuasion, and partly through presents.⁵² This text has been suspected of lacking enthusiasm for the concept of conducting the mission with “iron”, partly because the hagiographer sparingly recounted Charlemagne's actions towards the Saxons, despite having an excellent reason to do so.⁵³

50 *Vita Liutbirgae Virginis*, edition: *Das Leben der Liutbirg. Eine Quelle zur Geschichte der Sachsen in karolingischer Zeit*, ed. O. Menzel (Monumenta Germaniae Historica Dt. MA, 3), Leipzig 1937, c. 1, p. 10: “nobilissimam ac praepotentem viribus gentem Saxonum partim bellis, partim ingenio suo ac magnae sagacitatis industria, insuper etiam magnis muneribus acquisivit”. The author of the hagiography chose the verbs in a characteristic way: in relation to Charles' actions towards the Saxons he used “acquisivit”, in relation to religious change – “subjugavit” – J. Ehlers, *Die Sachsenmission...*, pp. 46-47.

51 Beumann, *Die Hagiographie*, p. 314: in this case, the collection of missionary means could have been inspired by Gregory the Great – through a letter quoted in the work of The Venerable Bede, known to, *i.a.*, Widukind.

52 *Vita Sturmi*, MGH SS 2, c. 22, ed. G.H. Pertz, Hannover 1829, p. 376: „Regnante feliciter domino rege Carolo, annos quatuor Saxonum gens saeva et infestissima cunctis fuit, et paganus ritibus nimis dedita. Rex vero Carolus Domino semper devotus, cum ipse Christianissimus esset, cogitare coepit qualiter gentem hanc Christo acquirere quivisset. Inito servorum Dei consilio, poposcit ut precibus Dominum votis suis annuere obtinerent. Congregato tam grandi exercitu, invocato Christi nomine, Saxoniam profectus est, assumptis universis sacerdotibus, abbatibus, presbyteris, et omnibus orthodoxis atque fidei cultoribus, ut gentem quae ab initio mundi daemonum vinculis fuerat obligata, doctrinis sacris mite et suave Christi jugum credendo subire fecissent. Quo cum rex pervenisset, partim bellis, partim suasionibus, partim etiam muneribus, maxima ex parte gentem illam ad fidem Christi convertit. Et post non longum tempus totam provinciam illam in parochias episcopales divisit, et servos Domini ad docendum et baptizandum potestatem dedit”. The depiction of the wars with the Saxons by Egil, cf. H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, pp. 44-45. About the similarity in the indicated range between *Vita Sturmi* and *Vita Liutbirgis*, see J. Ehlers, *Die Sachsenmission...*, footnote 55, p. 46.

53 L.E. von Padberg, *Zum Sachsenbild in hagiographischen Quellen*, in: *Sachsen und Franken in Westfalen. Studien zur Sachsenforschung* 12, ed. H.-J. Hässler, Oldenburg 1999, pp. 185-187.

However, the matter seems to be more complex. Firstly, there was a discussion about the time of the origin of the text. Its protagonist, Sturmi, died in 779, which set the narrative horizon. Egil, Sturmi's disciple, lived until 822. Historians debated whether *Vita* was written around the year 800 or after Charlemagne's death, between 814-822, and whether the account in chapters 22-24 about the Saxon affairs and Sturmi's and the Fulda monastery's involvement in them, in Charlemagne's service, was based on annalistic texts.⁵⁴ Another aspect is even more important for these considerations. The statement about the ways of converting the Saxons is placed directly after the information about the events dated to the fourth year of Charlemagne's reign - the year 772. These events happened at the very beginning of the wars with the Saxons. Therefore, Egil's words should not be seen as a summary of the entire thirty-year period but specifically of the first phase of Charles's relations with the Saxons and their Christianization. The authors drawing from *Vita Sturmi* had a broader perspective. While they directly used Egil's formulations, they placed them in a different context. In addition, the reference to the conversion of the Saxons to the new faith through war, but also through persuasion and gifts, logically complements Egil's previous phrase about Charlemagne gathering bishops, abbots, priests, and worshippers so that they would submit the Saxons with gentleness and sweetness to the yoke of faith in Christ.

All these aspects could have been known to the Saxon authors inspired by the phrase from *Vita Sturmi*. However, they had the freedom to give it the meanings in their texts that the hagiographer in the original source may not have intended at all. It is also worth adding that the theme even appeared early in Alcuin's letter to his teacher Colcu, proclaiming in 790, somewhat prematurely, the conversion of the Saxons and Frisians by Charlemagne.⁵⁵ The texts from Charlemagne's time - not only representing official viewpoints - could, in other words, not only indicate the variety of means but also changing goals - as Hans-Dietrich Kahl⁵⁶ suggested when writing about the possible three phases of escalation in Charles's intentions and actions.

54 Cf. M. Lintzel, *Die Quellenwert von Eigils Vita S. Sturmi für die Geschichte der Sachsenkriege Karls des Großen. Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der alten Sachsen IX*, "Sachsen und Anhalt" 8 (1932), pp. 6-16, reprinted in: M. Lintzel, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, vol. 1, Berlin 1961, pp. 128-137.

55 Alcuini *Epistolae*, 7, in: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Epistolae* 4, Berlin 1895, p. 32: "Nam antique Saxones et omnes Frisonum populi, instante rege Karolo, alios premiis at alios minis sollicitante, ad fidem Christi conversi sunt".

56 H.-D. Kahl, *Karl der Grosse und die Sachsen. Stufen und Motiven einer historischer "Eskalation"*, in: *Politik, Gesellschaft, Geschichtsschreibung. Giessener Festgabe für Frantiek Graus zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. R.Ch. Schwinges, Köln 1982, pp. 49-130. The three stages suggested by Kahl include: voluntary Christianization under Frankish hegemony, voluntary Christianization under imposed sovereignty, and finally forced conversion together with annexation.

Returning to the text of Liutbirga's Life, other themes are also worth mentioning.⁵⁷ The narrative about the family begins with the first convert - Hessi. The pagan past, including the eminence of the lineage in previous generations, was cut off with a thick line, deliberately condemned to oblivion. Secondly, Charlemagne's imperial dignity was strongly emphasized - which, as we recall, he acquired towards the end of the period of the Saxon wars - as well as the fact that he conquered many nations.⁵⁸ From the perspective of the writer, succumbing to Augustus, the ruler of many peoples, was in line with the order of things. The use of the name "Saxons", although Hessi represented only a certain region, indicated an advanced process of replacing those local identities, such as Ostphalian, with a broader Saxon identification.

Maintaining chronological order, we should now turn to the first historical work created in the Saxon circle and dealing with the subject of the Saxon conquest. An anonymous author from the late 9th century known as Poeta Saxo composed a poem about Charlemagne, dedicating his work to the hero's descendant, King Arnulf. The creation of the poem is dated to the years 888-892. Traditionally, its writing was associated with the Corvey monastery, although Ingrid Rembold proposed the circle of the Paderborn cathedral as the place of origin. The poem, along with the aforementioned *Translatio Liborii* and the *Life of Liborius*, would form a part of Bishop Bisio's project aimed at regaining the favor of the Carolingian monarch for himself and his diocese.⁵⁹

The first four books of the poem form a hexametric narrative of Charlemagne's deeds, year by year, also based on annals. In the fifth book, Poeta Saxo wrote in an elegiac convention about Charlemagne's death and legacy. It is also here that his declaration of fiery love and gratitude to the emperor was included - from the perspective of a member of the Saxon community.⁶⁰ Poeta loves Charlemagne because he spared no effort to convert his people. The motif of Charlemagne's relation with the Saxons is also strongly emphasized in the earlier, "chronological" books.

Starting the narrative of the wars, writing about the year 772, Poeta stated that despite their wild nature and hard hearts, the Saxons had to

⁵⁷ See: R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, p. 149.

⁵⁸ *Vita Liutbirgae Virginis*, c. 1, p. 10: "Temporibus imperatoris magni Karoli, qui primus in Germaniae partibus Augusti Caesaris nomen adeptus est, qui multas gentes Francorum regno subiugavit..."

⁵⁹ I. Rembold, *The Poeta Saxo at Paderborn*, "Early Medieval Europe" 21 (2013), pp. 169-196.

⁶⁰ Poeta Saxo, *Annalium de gestis Caroli Magni imperatoris libri quinque*, ed. P. von Winterfeld, in: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Poetae* 4, Berlin 1899, lib. V, v. 23-28, p. 56: „Denique sum Carolo semper flagrantis amoris/ Sum quoque perpetui debitor obsequii/ Is gentem nostrum fidei cognoscere lucem/ Fecerat abiectis perfidiae tenebris/ Quam bellando diu, quam multa pericula passus/ Quam sudore gravi, quam studio vigili!"

submit to the yoke of Christ and immediately pointed to the reasons for this. The Franks, as worshippers of Christ (*Christicolae*), had already conquered many nations that supported them - and, undoubtedly, they were supported by *virtus Dei*. In contrast, the Saxons remained a divided people without a king, having as many chieftains as there were districts. Hence, it was difficult for them to defend themselves.⁶¹ These verses covertly valorize the Saxon people as an opponent who, even though fighting for the wrong cause, was conquered only with difficulty, thanks to the help of God and a clear advantage in human terms.

Poeta Saxo recognized Einhard's authority as the source of his own knowledge. He also referred to annals and possibly, for the period 803-813, other texts. Hence, there was some inconsistency in the narration regarding the subject discussed here.⁶² From the official Frankish point of view, Poeta recounted all the war events, including the massacre of the Saxons in Verden,⁶³ and also repeated the anti-Saxon statements of the Charlemagne's most famous biographer. In the part describing the events after Widukind's surrender and baptism, the accusations of treachery against the Saxons become more severe. For example, Poeta extensively described how in 798, while avenging the murder of the ruler's envoys, the army sent by Charlemagne ruthlessly devastated the lands beyond the Elbe.⁶⁴ Undoubtedly, the author did not aim to heal the long-held traumas that these events might have left in the Saxon consciousness.⁶⁵

On the other hand, Poeta Saxo devoted as many as 47 verses in his hexameter to the peaceful conclusion of the struggles, dated to the year 803 - *nobilis annus*,⁶⁶ in his words. The author suggested that the peace in Salz⁶⁷ was negotiated, not imposed on the Saxons. As a result, thanks to Charlemagne, the Franks and the Saxons could form one (common) *gens* and *populus*⁶⁸ after accepting

61 Poeta Saxo, lib. I, v. 32-44, pp. 7-8.

62 Regarding Poeta Saxo in this aspect: H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, pp. 69-74; H. Beumann, *Die Hagiographie...*, pp. 299-301.

63 About this event in other works – there are as many as 4 texts in: *Die Eingliederung der Sachsen in das Frankenreich*, ed. W. Lammers, Darmstadt 1970, pp. 109-257 together with C. Bauer's "revisionist" article, according to which there was no massacre, but a deportation of the Saxons.

64 Poeta Saxo, lib. III, v. 383-391, p. 40.

65 R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, p. 157.

66 Poeta Saxo, lib. IV, v. 92 ff.

67 This is the invention of the author who used the reference to Salz in the Frankish annals placed in the context of Charles's negotiations with envoys from Byzantium – R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, pp. 157-158.

68 Poeta Saxo, lib. IV, v.107-119, pp. 48-49: "At vero censum Francorum regibus ullum/ Solvere ne penitus deberent atque tributum,/ Cunctorum parties statuit sententia concors,/ Sed tantum decimas divina lege statutas/ Offerrent ac presulibus parere studerent/ Ipsorumque simul clero, qui dogmata sacra/ Quique fidem domino placitum vitamque doceret/ Tum sub

rights from him. This was a (rhetorical) step forward compared to Einhard's account – and it was also taken by the Saxon author. Poeta Saxo's use of the word *gens* implied a kind of merging of the two peoples into one⁶⁹ if Einhard's formulations could be interpreted as a community of the Christian people that the Saxons were to create with the Franks. When Poeta Saxo narrated the alliance that Charlemagne was to conclude with the Saxons in 803, he emphasized "peaceful" administrative, and religious aspects of the great change – clearly overshadowing the military means leading to it. The permission for the Saxons to govern themselves by their own laws was presented as a concession or privilege on the part of Charles. In the *Annals of Quedlinburg*, written in the early 11th century, this theme will be interestingly developed – there, Charlemagne grants the Saxons the right to enjoy their old liberties (*antiqua libertate*), abolishes tribute, and only requires the payment of church tithes.⁷⁰ In contrast to the spirit of his own earlier narration about wars, Poeta Saxo, in the verses referring to the year 803, also stated that the piety and generosity of the king achieved more than terror.⁷¹ The model of Saxon-Frankish relations outlined there had a significant impact on Widukind's later work.⁷²

It is also striking in this text that attention is drawn to the material, or perhaps even civilizational, benefits brought to the Saxons by succumbing to Charles, and specifically, by the celebrated peace. The author evoked the image of the poor Saxons who were only then to learn the wealth that Gaul was overflowing with. Fabrics, silver, and wine were mentioned. It was suggested that it was an offer to win over the leaders, while Charlemagne subdued (had to subdue) the rest of them by force of arms.⁷³

In another passage, Poeta Saxo expressed gratitude to Charlemagne for liberating the Saxons from devilish cults, using the pronoun "nos", thus identifying himself with them.⁷⁴ This is why Charlemagne deserves a place in the choir of apostles, according to the author.

iudicibus, quos rex inponeret ipsis,/ Legatisque suis permissi legibus uti/ Saxones patriis et libertatis honore/ Hoc sunt postremo sociati foedere Francis,/ **Ut gens et populus fieret concorder unus**/ Ac semper regi parens aequaliter uni". Cf. R. Corradini, *Überlegungen...*, pp. 221-222.

⁶⁹ H. Mayr-Harting, *Charlemagne...*, p. 1127.

⁷⁰ *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. M. Giese, MGH SS rerum Germanicarum 72, Hannover 2004, s.a. 803, p. 437.

⁷¹ Poeta Saxo, lib. IV, v. 124-125, p. 49: "Plus regis pietas et munificentia fecit/ Quam terror".

⁷² S. Kaschke, *Sachsen...*, p. 160.

⁷³ Poeta Saxo, *Annalium de gestis Caroli Magni*, lib. V, v. 128-134, p. 49: "Copia pauperibus Saxonibus agnita primum/ Tunc fuerat rerum, quas Gallia fert opulenta/ Praedia praestiterat cum rex compluribus illic,/ Ex quibus acciperent preciose tegmina vestis,/ Argenti cumulos dulcisque fluentia Liei/ His ubi primores donis illexerat omnes/ subiectos sibimet reliquos obtriverat armis".

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*, lib. V, v. 31-32, p. 56: "Nempe sui vires regni collegerat omnes,/ Ut nos demoniacis cultibus abstraheret".

In the eschatological vision from the fifth book devoted to, *i.a.*, the death of the emperor, the poet sees Charles leading the Saxons that he had converted, behind, or rather alongside Saint Peter leading the baptized Jews, as well as Saints Paul, Andrew, John, Matthew, and Thomas with the peoples converted by them.⁷⁵ Poeta Saxo, probably writing for Arnulf of Carinthia, represents the culminating moment in the identification of the Saxons with their conqueror and, thus in their elite's entry into the Carolingian political community.⁷⁶

As discussed earlier, the *Translations* of Alexander, Vitus, Liborius, and Pusinna, as well as the *Life of Liutbirga*, in the 9th century presented the Saxon point of view serving the needs of the local aristocratic elite. They relied on a Frankish record of events - there is no independent Saxon tradition in them. Hagiographers, however, constantly reworked the theme of conquest to meet the needs of their audience. It was different with Poeta Saxo - his text was directed outwards and dedicated to Arnulf of Carinthia. None of these authors dared to criticize Charlemagne's motives and methods of conducting the wars, and the historical event itself gained the status of a threshold, collective, and shared Saxon experience.⁷⁷ As Robert Flierman indicated, the stories about translations represented different perspectives, serving the promotion and interests of aristocratic families with their monastic foundations, a royal monastery founded in Saxony with the participation of the Saxons, or a bishopric finding its sense of existence in the evangelization of Saxon lands.⁷⁸ All those texts were created in the southern regions of Saxony, closest to other lands of the Frankish kingdom, relatively populous and wealthy, where the issue of Saxon identity resonated more strongly than in the areas more distant from the powerful neighbor. Their authors, writing about the process of adopting Christianity by the Saxons, operated with the ideas of their innate virtues and subjectivity, with the involvement of God's will. The concepts emphasized in the texts prepared the ground for thoughts about the role of the Saxons and their history already fully articulated in the works of the 10th century.⁷⁹

The assumption of the throne in the kingdom, hitherto known as East Frankish, by a dynasty stemming from Saxony changed the climate surrounding

75 Ibidem, lib. V, v. 678-688, p. 71. The image is probably inspired by Gregory the Great's sermon referring to the reading about the sending of the 72 disciples of Jesus - H. Beumann, *Die Hagiographie...*, p. 302; also Gregory in a letter to Rekkared, the king of the Visigoths (who converted his people from Arianism to Catholicism), was to express the idea of the apostolate of kings - ibidem, p. 304. Cf. J. Ehlers, *Die Sachsenmission...*, p. 42.

76 Cf. H. Beumann, *Die Hagiographie...*, p. 323.

77 R. Flierman, *Saxon Identities...*, pp. 161-162.

78 Ibidem, pp. 123-124.

79 E. Shuler, *Saxons...*, passim.

Saxon identity and caused a kind of ferment among people of letters. It was manifested, for example, in the statement of Hrotswitha of Gandersheim, who at the very beginning of her *Gesta Ottonis* declared that the King of Kings himself ordered the noble kingdom of the Franks to be transferred to the noble Saxon people.⁸⁰ *Regnum Saxonum* thus became one of the ways of defining a state ruled by the Ottonians, though certainly not a dominant one, nor penetrating into the practices of those rulers' chancelleries.⁸¹

In the new circumstances, a form of processing the historical trauma of the Saxons was undertaken by a monk of the frequently mentioned Abbey of Corvey, *i.e.*, Widukind. He perpetuated legends about the Saxons' arrival in their historical homelands and other aspects of their ancient history.⁸²

His three books of Saxon history (a title given later) were written between 967 and 973. Based on relatively few manuscripts, it is recognized that the work had three versions (A, B, C) - the last of which extended the narrative to the end of the life and reign of Otto the Great.

In the initial chapters of the first book, Widukind narrates the legendary origins of the Saxon people and the settling of their homeland, as well as their appearance in Britain. He praised their bravery and the cleverness of their leaders,⁸³ demonstrated in their encounters with both their enemies - the Thuringians - and their Frankish allies. Like Rudolf of Fulda, Widukind presented the Saxon war with the Thuringians, fought alongside

80 Hrotswitha, *Gesta Ottonis*, ed. P. von Winterfeld, in: *Hrotswithae opera*, MGH SS rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum 34, Berlin 1902, v. 1-4, p. 204: rex regum.../ Iussit Francorum transferri nobile regnum/ Ad claram gentem Saxonum".

81 Examples: W. Eggert, *Ostfränkisch -fränkisch -sächsisch -römisch -deutsch. Zur Benennung des rechtsrheinisch-nordalpinen Reiches bis zum Investiturstreit*, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 26 (1992), pp. 260-261.

82 *Widukindi monachi Corbeiensis Rerum Gestarum Saxoniarum libri tres*, ed. P. Hirsch, Hans-Eberhard Lohmann, MGH SS rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum 60, Hannover 1935 (further: Widukind).

83 About this part of Widukind's work, *i.a.*, J. Banaszkiewicz, *Widukind on the Saxon Origins: Saxo, Thuring, and Landkaufszene* (*Res gestae Saxonicae*, I, 5). *The Imitation of Ancient Patterns, an Old Tribal Saga or the Product of Scholarly Erudition by Saxon Intellectuals of the 9th-10th Centuries?*, "Acta Poloniae historica" 91 (2005), pp. 25-54, Polish version: *Widukind o saskich początkach: Saxo, Turyn i Landkaufszene* (*Res gestae Saxonicae*, I, 5). *Naśladownictwo antycznych wzorów, stara saga plemienna czy wytwór uczoności saskich intelektualistów IX-X wieku*, „Studia Źródłoznawcze” 42 (2004), pp. 19-35. The Frankish themes were treated rather marginally, but there was an important bibliography in footnote 41. Also: H. Weddige, *Heldensage...*, pp. 23 ff. Different approaches to the narrative of Widukind about the Saxon beginnings are mentioned by Springer, *Sage und Geschichte*, pp. 204-210. The tradition regarding the war between the Saxons and Thuringians can be found in the versions of Widukind, Rudolf of Fulda, and the creator of the *Annals of Quedlinburg* - cf. also M. Springer, *Sagenhaftes aus der Geschichtswissenschaft*, in: *Geschichtsvorstellungen. Bilder, Texte und Begriffe aus dem Mittelalter. Festschrift Hans-Werner Goetz*, ed. S. Patzold, A. Ratmann-Lutz, V. Scior, Wien-Köln-Weimar 2012, pp. 115-152.

the Franks, as a key event in the early history of his people.⁸⁴ In his version, there also appeared a theme of Frankish-Saxon antagonism. Namely, when Saxon allies arrived at the Frankish King Theodoric's camp, they were distinctly different from the Franks in appearance, attire, and armaments, so some people from the king's entourage expressed concern that they might one day destroy the Frankish empire.⁸⁵ As a consequence, after the great victory of the Saxons over the Thuringians, the Franks proved treacherous and leaned towards breaking the alliance and providing immediate support to the Thuringians against the Saxons. However, the Saxons preempted the attack, struck the Thuringians again, slaughtered them, captured the city, and King Theodoric, like it or not, accepted their rule over it. Even though the king-traitor died a well-deserved death, as the chronicler noted, the alliance and friendship between the Franks and the Saxons was maintained, even if the Saxons experienced the changing loyalty of the Franks.⁸⁶

It is striking to note a clear shift in emphasis compared to Rudolf of Fulda's account. The Frankish king is no longer portrayed as a positive figure. The Franks can be treacherous and succumb to fear of the Saxons. The Saxons, on the other hand, are depicted as a completely independent entity. Ultimately, it is their swords that determine the course of events. The narrative introduces a theme of foreignness and distinctiveness of the Saxons in relation to the Franks, illustrated in a way that appealed to the recipient: through their hairstyle, attire, and weapons, which, by the way, gave the people their name (Saxons, from the long knife "saxo"). There is also a belief in the moral superiority of the Saxons over the *varia fides* demonstrated by the Franks.⁸⁷ At this stage of history, the Saxons lacked only true faith.⁸⁸ Widukind's vision reflects an elevated sense of self-worth among the Saxon elites, dating back to the time when power was assumed throughout the kingdom by a dynasty from their own ranks.⁸⁹

84 Widukind I, 9-13, pp. 10-23.

85 Ibidem, I, 9, pp. 15-16: "Erant etiam qui dicerent tantis ac talibus amicis Francos non indigere; indomitum genus hominum fore, et si presentem terram in haberent, eos procul dubio esse, qui Francorum imperium destruerent". Traditionally, this part is interpreted as *vaticinium post eventum* interwoven by Widukind, making allusion to the assumption of power in the kingdom of the Franks by the Saxons. Cf. H.-W. Eggert, B. Pätzold, *Wir-Gefühl und regnum Saxonum bei frühmittelalterlichen Geschichtsschreibern*, Weimar 1984, p. 208.

86 Widukind, I, 10-13, pp. 17-22.

87 Which may reflect the resentment caused by the events from the reign of Conrad I – H. Beumann, *Widukind...*, pp. 223-224, as well as the heightened sense of value of the Saxons, who in fact only in the 10th century acquired a supra-local identity - this is one of the theses of Matthias Becher's work, *Rex, Dux und Gens...*, for the abovementioned issues - cf. pp. 39, 65.

88 W. Eggert, B. Pätzold, *Wir-Gefühl...*, pp. 210-211.

89 M. Becher, *Volksbildung...*, pp. 76-77.

This vision of history of mutual relations culminates in a very succinct story of Charlemagne in chapter fifteen. Widukind describes him as the mightiest of kings and also the wisest of all mortals of his time. It was through this wisdom that he did not want to leave his Saxon neighbors in a wrongful situation. He tried in every way to guide them to the right path. Eventually, using gentle persuasion as well as military impetus, in his thirtieth year of reign when he had already become emperor, he forced what he had never ceased to strive for. Those who had long been allies and friends of the Franks were made brothers and, as it were, one people with them in the Christian faith, as we can see.⁹⁰ Immediately after presenting this information, Widukind jumps a hundred years ahead and begins the story of the Liudolfing dynasty. Here, in fact, his continuous historical narration begins. But the residue of the idea expressed in book I, chapter 15, which was paving its way in the intricate narration of the wars involving the Saxon-Thuringian-Frankish triangle, will become the combination of the two names, Franks and Saxons, throughout the chronicle.⁹¹

Apparently, in this narrative the long and bloody battles, known from Einhard's chronicles and the Frankish annals, were reduced and condensed, taking the form of Carolingian efforts undertaken for the righteous goal of converting the neighboring noble people to Christianity. The narrator approached this history from the perspective of the Frankish ruler. At the same time, through a chronological indication - the information about the thirtieth year of Charlemagne's reign - Widukind wanted to demonstrate that he knew the original source. On the other hand he largely ignored the Carolingian historiographical tradition in his work and only mentioned the events from that period digressively and not in chronological order.⁹² Einhard - the above-quoted passage with Charles's desideratum that the Saxons should become one people with the Franks - and the aforementioned Poeta Saxo were also referred to by the historian of Corvey in a sentence suggesting that it had just happened: both peoples became *quasi una gens*.⁹³ However, that fine word *quasi*, distinguishing his

90 Widukind I, 15, p. 25: "Magnus vero Carolus cum esset regum fortissimus, non minori sapientia vigilabat. Enim vero considerabat, quia suis temporibus omni mortali prudentior erat, finitimam gentem nobilemque vano errore retineri non oportere; modis omnibus satagebat, quatinus ad veram viam duceretur. Et nunc blanda suasionem, nunc bellorum inpetu ad id cogebat, tandemque tricesimo imperii suo anno obtinuit – imperator quippe ex rege creatus est – quod multis temporibus elaborando non defecit: ob id qui olim socii et amici erant Francorum, iam fratres et quasi una gens ex Christiana fide, veluti modo videmus, facta est".

91 W. Eggert, *Ostfränkisch...*, p. 263.

92 Cf. H. Keller, *Widukinds Bericht über die Aachener Wahl und Krönung Ottos I.*, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 29 (1995), pp. 449-450 and footnote 359.

93 About the origin of this phrase from either Einhard or Poeta Saxo: K.H. Krüger, *Dionysius und Vitus als frühottonische Königsheilige. Zu Widukind 1, 33*, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 8

account from Poeta Saxo's, and emphasizing the importance of the community of faith, again following Einhard's example, shows Widukind's awareness that what may be suitable for poetry and rhetoric does not reflect reality. Widukind understood and accepted the fact that the Franks and the Saxons did not actually become one people.⁹⁴

The earlier account of Egil, as discussed before, is also relevant to this analysis. The description and interpretation of Charlemagne's actions (war and persuasion) found in Egil's account are clearly present in Widukind's narrative. The chronicler presents the same assessment of Charles the Great, his motivations and actions as in the canonical version of the events generated by the Frankish elites. He either explicitly supported this way of portraying Charlemagne, considering it sufficient, or by not adding any elements that would reflect his own Saxon tradition in the work that collected, discovered, or invented those traditions - he discreetly distanced himself from the interpretations of the victors.

Perhaps the brevity of Widukind's account of Charles's Christianization of the Saxons stemmed from his certainty about the success that crowned it. Lars Boje Mortensen suggested this interpretation by comparing Widukind's text with Dudo of Saint-Quentin's *Gesta Normannorum*. According to the scholar, the Saxon monk, writing more than 150 years after the events, unlike Dudo, did not need to prove that the Saxons and their rulers were Christians. Instead, he could focus on presenting the imperial aspirations of the Saxon rulers - using the style of Sallustius and thereby imbuing his narrative with a Roman perspective on history.⁹⁵

(1974), pp. 132-134; M. Lintzel, *Der Poeta Saxo als Quelle Widukinds von Corvey*, "Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde" 49 (1930) pp. 183 ff., reprinted in: M. Lintzel, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, vol. 2: *Zur Karolinger- und Ottonenzeit, zum hohen und späten Mittelalter, zur Literaturgeschichte*, Berlin 1961, pp. 312-315; H. Beumann, *Sachsen und Franken im werdenden Regnum Teutonicum*, in: *Angli e Sassoni al di qua e al di là del mare*, Spoleto 1986 (= Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo 32), p. 893. Einhard's work probably influenced Widukind on a more general level - the conception of the work; cf., H. Beumann, *Historiographische Konzeption und politische Ziele Widukinds von Corvey*, in: *La storiografia altomedievale (10-16 aprile 1969)*, vol. 2, Spoleto 1970 (= Settimane di studio del centro Italiano di studi sull' alto medioevo 17), pp. 872-874.

94 H. Mayr-Harting, *Charlemagne...*, p. 1127. On the other hand, Widukind could have referred to, e.g., numerous marriages between representatives of the Frankish and Saxon families - H. Beumann, *Einhard...*, p. 171, from earlier sources: M. Lintzel, *Die politische Haltung Widukinds von Corvey*, "Sachsen und Anhalt" 14 (1938), pp. 1-39, quotation based on a reprint in: H. Lintzel, *Ausgewählte Schriften...*, vol. 2: *Zur Karolinger- und Ottonenzeit, zum hohen und späten Mittelalter, zur Literaturgeschichte*, Berlin 1961, pp. 338-339 - emphasizing both factors: the chronicler's approach to Frankish traditions and the homogenization of the Saxon and of the Frankish elite of which Widukind must have been aware.

95 L.B. Mortensen, *Stylistic Choice in a Reborn Genre. The National Histories of Widukind of Corvey and Dudo of St. Quentin*, in: *Dudone di San Quintin* ed. P. Gatti, A. degl'Innocenti, Trento 1995, p. 93.

As a result of these efforts, *i.e.*, summarizing the entire war in the brief phrase “*bellorum inpetu*” and shaping the narrative from Chapter Fifteen in a way that shows Charlemagne’s point of view, intentions, and actions, it would seem that there is no chance to introduce a potential Saxon hero, a resistance leader, the namesake of the chronicler, and perhaps even his ancestor.⁹⁶ Nor is there a possibility of presenting another point of view. And yet, Widukind appears in the analyzed chronicle. When the historian set out to present Matilda’s (wife of Henry I) lineage, he mentioned her father Thiadrich and his brothers Widukind, Immed, and Reginberht, and then emphasized that they were descendants of the great prince Widukind, who fought a mighty war with Charlemagne for almost thirty years.⁹⁷ The use of the same word *magnus* in reference to both antagonists is intriguing.⁹⁸ Describing Widukind as “great” and stating that he waged such a long war against Charlemagne (although not strictly accurate, as Widukind’s participation in the Saxon uprisings ended halfway through that period - with the baptism of the hero in Attigny in 785) carries a clear implication. He is almost equated with Charlemagne, considered a fully worthy adversary of the emperor. There is also no mention of the pagan faith to which he adhered until he fought against Charlemagne.

It is in the Saxon context that Charlemagne receives the highest praise in Widukind’s chronicle - or this glorification is repeated. The historian sees his efforts to convert the Saxons as a necessary action: the monarch faced a problem that had to be resolved. The adopted method in no way offended Saxon pride, which was, after all, rooted in their military achievements. In addition, it is interesting that when writing about the Saxons who conquered Britain, Widukind did not mention the efforts of their descendants among their brethren on the continent to Christianize them - the efforts that were undertaken in the name of kinship. Though he was certainly aware of the tradition concerning Boniface and other, perhaps less well-known, missionaries. Thus, in this account, Charlemagne becomes not only the main, but simply the only, apostle of the Saxons who was worthy of mention.

Widukind exploits a motif of contrasting motivations of the warring parties,⁹⁹ known to medieval authors from the works of the Roman historian

96 Apart from the same name, there are no positive indications of kinship; the chronicler did not admit it; cf. H. Beumann, *Historiographische Konzeption...*, footnote 33, p. 871.

97 Widukind, I, 31, p. 44: “*Et hi errant stirpis magni ducis Widukindi, qui bellum potens gessit contra Magnum Karolum per triginta ferme annos*”. On the genealogy of Matilda and the legitimacy of deriving her from the chieftain Widukind, cf., Sean Gilsdorf, in: *Queenship and Sanctity. The Lives of Mathilda and the Epitaph of Adelheid*, ed. S. Gilsdorf, Washington 2004, appendix 2, pp. 147-153.

98 Highlighted by H. Beumann, *Sachsen...*, p. 898.

99 On Widukind’s use of Sallust: H. Beumann, *Widukind von Korvei. Untersuchungen zur Geschichtsschreibung und Ideengeschichte des 10. Jahrhunderts*, Weimar 1950, pp. 94-106, about

Gaius Sallustius Crispus, dating back to the 1st century BC. The Saxon monk first employs this device in the description of the legendary war between the Saxons and the Thuringians. In his account, the latter, acting defensively, fought for their homeland, their wives and children, and ultimately, for their own lives whereas the Saxons fought for glory and new territories (I, 9). This entails a suggestion or statement that, for the Saxons, the alternatives were either death in glory or victory, fame, and loot, and for the Thuringians saving or not the lives and honor of their wives, children, and finally their own. The former type of stakes referred to noble pursuits, while the latter involved the mundane concreteness, albeit in the most dramatic form.

This phrase will reappear when the chronicler recounts the contemporary wars of his compatriots against the Slavs. And then, the Saxon troops of Otto I will fight for glory and land, whereas the Slavs will fight for freedom.¹⁰⁰ Although the motivation of the Slavs was not condemned, the chronicler considered it subordinate to glory and the expansion of the empire, which, in Widukind's thinking, ranked at the forefront of values, alongside *pax*, which they served.¹⁰¹ However, the historian did not even provide a narrative pretext to employ a similar juxtaposition in relation to the Saxons who defended their freedom against Charlemagne for 30 years - as this war was reduced in the chronicle to enigmatic military attacks treated as one of Charlemagne's political tools.¹⁰²

the parts analyzed in this paragraph, the juxtaposition of the motives of the warring parties in relation to the pairs Saxons-Thuringians, Otto's army - Hungarians and Saxons-Slavs in detail on p. 174; Helmut Vester, *Widukind von Korvei – ein Beispiel zur Wirkungsgeschichte Sallusts*, "Der altsprachliche Unterricht" 21 (1978), pp. 5-22; L. Weinrich, *Tradition und Individualität in den Quellen zur Lechfeldschlacht 955*, "Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters" 27 (1971), pp. 291-313, particularly pp. 301-304.

100 Widukind II, 20, p. 84: „Illi vero nihilominus bellum quam pacem elegerunt, omnem miseriam carae libertatis postponentes (...) Transeunt sane dies plurimi, his [sc. Saxonibus] pro gloria et pro magno latoque imperio, illis [sc. Sclavis] pro libertate ac ultima servitute varie certantibus": Sallust's reference point in this case is *The Conspiracy of Catiline* and the speech given by the title character before the decisive battle with the following fragment: „nos pro patria, pro libertate, pro vita certantibus, illis supervacaneum est pro potentia paucorum pugnare" - C. Sallusti Crispi *Catilinae coniuratio*, in: C. Sallusti Crispi *Catilina, Iugurtha, Fragmenta ampliora*, ed. A. Kurfess, Leipzig 1968, c. 58, p. 101. H. Beumann, *Widukind...*, p. 207 points out that the chronicler had a rather neutral attitude towards the Slavs.

101 H. Beumann, *Widukind...*, pp. 174, 207, 209-210.

102 This brief depiction of the war theme makes me disagree with the interpretation of Stergios Laitos, who considers the passage from chapter 15 of the first book as another manifestation of Widukind's narrative strategy legitimizing the power of the Ottonians through the military deeds of the Saxons equating them with the Franks: "He evaluated the military conflicts between Charlemagne and the Saxons positively. War is here viewed positively as a means by which Christianization and with it the process of civilization was implemented among the Saxons. Charlemagne is the key figure in this process. At the same time Widukind,

At the same time, this phrase holds significant meaning for the way the chronicler perceived his native history. Our contemporary evaluation of individual and national freedoms, and at least some reservations toward conquest wars, should not distort our interpretation of these rhetorical formulae and their application in the work of the monk from Corvey. Admiration for the Romans, admiration for Alexander the Great, present in the medieval Christian culture of Europe, was linked to attributing great value to the glory surrounding past heroes and being the object of desire for those still alive. For chroniclers, not only panegyrists, the issue of glory was strongly present in their thinking, evoked not only as a part of the topics of prologues to justify the effort of writing - alongside such concepts as memory and forgetting or providing an example/model (of virtues or vices). The defeated and the conquered could display heroism in narratives of great wars - and this even enhanced the glory of the victorious, making their achievement even more remarkable. What is more, the defeated could also be attributed motivations that the author understands; however, victory remains for him the decisive criterion here. From Widukind's perspective, the defeated can count on (some) understanding but not on support for their reasons. The victor is entitled not only to loot and glory but also to positive moral judgement. And it is precisely for this reason that Widukind, an opponent of Charlemagne, and this heroism did not deserve to be described in the work of his namesake. For the Saxon leader, losing the war meant losing the battle of reasons as well. He was like the Numidian king Jugurtha or the rebel Catiline, who were both described as defeated by Salust. And the chronicler Widukind did not want to portray the Saxons in the role in which Roman historians cast the Numids, Gauls, Cimbri, and Teutons. He absolutely did not want to place the Saxons - those of his time and their ancestors - in the role of the subdued. They had to appear to the audience as victors, and since they were victors, they were also conquerors. This aspect of conquest further underscores the motif of the unnamed and non-identifiable city that the Saxons were said to have captured from the Thuringians in their first great war.

By the mere, "classical" origin of the phrase and the context of its double use, Widukind positioned the Saxons on the same side as Romans in the universal history. He assumed that it was the conquerors whose role was to

through the inclusion of Charlemagne, constructs the necessary factuality and a solid ideological and historical basis of legitimation, in order to justify the rise of the tribe of the Saxons and the spread of the power of the Ottonian rule" - S. Laitsos, *War and Nation-building in Widukind of Corvey's Deeds of the Saxons*, in: *Byzantine War Ideology. Between Roman Imperial Concept and Christian Religion*, *Akten des Internationalen Symposiums (Wien, 19.-21.Mai 2011)*, Wien 2012 (= Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung 30), p. 64.

establish a new order. This can be seen in his final praise of Henry I - portrayed as the greatest of the kings of Europe, who left to his successors an extensive empire not inherited from ancestors but acquired by himself with God's permission.¹⁰³ Adding to this circumstance is the fact that, for the chronicler, unlike, *e.g.*, several decades later for Bruno of Querfurt, the topic of war for faith does not exist (also Otto I's missionary policy did not attract his interest).¹⁰⁴ Similarly, in the tale of Charlemagne and the Saxons, there is hardly a theme of conquest; instead, there is evangelization. In contrast in the account of the Liudolfing fights with the Slavs, there is conquest, instead of mission.¹⁰⁵

As a result, in his vision of Saxon history two periods become evident: the legendary period when they triumphed over the Thuringians and were a menace to the Franks, and the later one when, together with the Franks under the rule of kings from Saxony, they defeated the Slavs, Hungarians, and all other enemies.¹⁰⁶ At the same time, the reader will not learn from Widukind's work any details about how the Saxons and the Franks - a people respected by the chronicler but placed second after the Saxons - eventually joined forces.

Difficult moments in the history of the relationship between the Saxons and the Franks are further blurred by Widukind through the introduction of a third entity. This time, it is no longer the Thuringians, but the Romans. From the perspective of Saxon or northern historians of the 10th century, the Romans were not just an extinct people who once ruled the world. There were also contemporary contenders for the name and heritage. This group included the city of Rome in the mid 10th century along with its local aristocracy, as well as the Eastern Empire - smaller or more powerful potential antagonists of the young Ottonian monarchy. The aspirations of both competitors, within the chronicle's literary creation under the wings of the Liudolfings, could be rejected and ridiculed. Alternatively, at least for a moment, it was possible to take a completely different approach, paying homage to the rhetoric but also delving deeper into thought. One could agree that they had the right to call themselves Romans, and yet devalue the worth of their "Romanness".

This kind of clue is suggested by the literary tirade of Liudprand of Cremona, an author associated with the Ottonian court, who was contemporary

103 Widukind, I, 40, p. 60: „...defunctus est ipse rerum dominus et regum maximus Europae, omni virtutis animi corporisque nulli secundus, relinquens ...magnum latumque imperium, non a patribus sibi relictum, sed per semet ipsum adquisitum et a solo Deo concessum”.

104 H. Beumann, *Widukind...*, p. 212.

105 Ibidem, p. 225, footnote 2.

106 At the same time, the wars with the Thuringians from the first chapters of Widukind's work are a kind of prefiguration of the wars of Henry and Otto with Hungary - H. Weddige, *Heldensage...*, p. 28.

to Widukind. In his account of his mission to Constantinople in 968, Liudprand relates one of his supposed conversations with Emperor Nikephoros II Phokas. After a series of offensive remarks by the emperor, culminating in him addressing the envoy; “you are not even Romans, but Lombards”, Liudprand had an immediate retort prepared to counter this intended insult. He declared that Romulus was a fratricide and the son of a harlot, and the first Romans were nothing more than slaves and fugitive murderers. He then proclaimed that “we, that is the Lombards, Saxons, Franks, Lotharingians, Bavarians, and Swabians”, held them in such contempt that the term “you Roman” was used offensively against their enemies, encompassing all possible vices, including cowardice, greed, immorality, and a penchant for deceit.¹⁰⁷ Interpreting this fascinating passage leads to the idea that, for the narrator, Romans were scoundrels from their mythical beginnings, remained so during his time, and implicitly they must have been so throughout their history, and therefore, also when they conquered the world. Thus, the value of their achievements is undermined, except for the value of being a winner.

A similar element appeared, though less pronounced, in Widukind’s account. The chronicler narrated the victory of Otto’s forces over the Greeks (Byzantines) in southern Italy in 969. He stated that the Greeks had been rulers of many peoples since ancient times. However, they had been defeated, and only some of their prisoners were allowed to return to New Rome with their noses cut off, which was to be the reason for overthrowing Emperor Nikephoros.¹⁰⁸ The expressions about dominating the world and the name of New Rome are not ironic in this passage. Instead, they refer to a historical tradition that the historiographer apparently considered alien.

Liudprand’s voice - as someone associated with the Ottonian court, familiar with Saxon traditions and viewpoints - carried a message of unity of diverse peoples under Ottonian rule. The Franks and the Saxons, this time in a broader context, joined forces against the Romans. At the same time, Liudprand’s anger towards the Romans, and his alleged refusal of claim

¹⁰⁷ Liudprand, *Relatio de legatione Constantinopolitana*, in: *Die Werke Liudprands von Cremona*, ed. J. Becker, MGH SS rer. Germ. 41, Hannover-Leipzig 1915, c. 12, p. 182. This fragment is referred to by S. MacLean, *Who Were the Lotharingians? Defining Political Community after the End of the Carolingian Empire*, in: *Historiography and Identity, IV: Writing History Across Medieval Eurasia*, ed. W. Pohl, D. Mahoney, [Brepols] 2021, pp. 247-248. Cf. E. Karpf, *Herrscherlegitimation und Reichsbegriff in der ottonischen Geschichtsschreibung des 10. Jahrhunderts*, Stuttgart 1985, pp. 45-46 and footnote 241.

¹⁰⁸ Widukind III, 72, p. 148: “Graeci... ab exordio fere mundi plurimarum gentium domini...”; III, 73, p. 149: “[the victorious Saxons allowed the Greek survivors of defeat]...obtruncatis naribus Novam Romam remeare”; cf. H. Beumann, *Imperator Romanorum, rex gentium. Zu Widukind III 76*, in: H. Beumann, *Ausgewählte Aufsätze...*, pp. 333-334.

Roman heritage, might have been one of the voices but had minimal chance of becoming the dominant one. For historians and their erudite readers of the time, something else was of paramount importance. Adding his people's history to that of Rome meant giving them a share in universal history. Similarly, the Christianization of the Saxons included them in the sacred, universal history initiated by Christ's sacrifice.¹⁰⁹

As mentioned earlier, victory morally valorized the intentions and actions of the participants. Widukind expresses this with full consistency, but let us also draw a parallel from another text. Over 200 years later, the Polish chronicler Vincent (Vincencius) Kadłubek integrated the legend of an ancient war between the old Poles and Alexander the Great into his narrative.¹¹⁰ The dominant feature of this story is the juxtaposition of Alexander's pursuit of glory, greatness, power, and rule, and the defense of freedom by the Poles who were to resort to methods that did not bring glory: murdering envoys and employing cunning military tactics. Their outstanding victory justified their actions.¹¹¹ However, in another book by Vincent, the fierce defense of freedom by the pagan *gens Pollexianorum* against the forces of the Polish prince does not win the author's approval. Their freedom is a freedom to remain in the darkness of paganism and, also important, a freedom that, in Vincent's eyes, cannot defend itself.¹¹²

Did Widukind, by using euphemisms to describe the conquest of the Saxons by Charlemagne, try to distort history? Did he attempt to create a conspiracy of silence around it? These questions may sound too modern, but the problem of manipulating historical material has a universal dimension. In the case of Widukind and other authors from his era, one must consider the coexistence of two parallel ways of narrating history. Apart from written texts, there were also historical accounts in oral circulation, including those in artistic form. For the authors - as evidenced by the use of topical phrases in the introductions to their narratives, such as: "there would be much more to tell, but in order not to bore the reader with prolixity of things..." - it was clear that it was impossible to include everything in their text that could be heard about history in various places and forms. The omission or refusal to include stories about Charlemagne, his war with the Saxons, and the heroic leader Widukind, did not mean an attempt to eliminate them from

¹⁰⁹ K.H. Krüger, *Die älteren Sachsen...*, p. 226.

¹¹⁰ *Magistri Vincentii dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum*, ed. M. Plezia, Monumenta Poloniae Historica n.s. 11, Kraków 1994, I, 9.

¹¹¹ Interpretation of this story in, i.a. - D. von Güttner-Sporzyński, *Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and his Chronica Polonorum*, in: *Writing History in Medieval Poland Bishop Vincentius of Cracow and the Chronica Polonorum*, ed. D. von Güttner-Sporzyński, Turnhout 2017, p. 11.

¹¹² Cf. B. Kürbis, *Pollexianorum cervicosa feritas. Dzikość i barbarzyństwo w opinii mistrza Wincentego*, in: *Stowianie w dziejach Europy*, ed. J. Ochmański, Poznań 1974, pp. 131-138.

historical memory. The monk from Corvey developed a certain canon, but with the awareness of the future coexistence of the topics and versions that he did not include himself.

The dedication of the work to Matilda, the daughter of Otto the Great, a girl in her teens but already consecrated as the abbess in Quedlinburg, directs us to an additional meaning of treating the topic of Christianization of the Saxons and their union with the Franks - even assuming that Widukind's intention of the dedicating was born when his work in its basic framework was already complete.¹¹³ This formed the ideological basis of the royal power of the Ottonians, which involved the cooperation of the Saxons and the Franks, as well as the Bavarians, Swabians, and Lotharingians. The Franks, being the natural depositaries of the imperial tradition of Charlemagne, deserved a special place, and in Widukind's account their cooperation with the Saxons became a model for the entire kingdom.¹¹⁴ Dedicating the work to a representative of the ruling house at that particular moment, just after the death of old Queen Matilda and Archbishop William of Mayence, when she was the only representative of the dynasty living north of the Alps and thus responsible for representing it, despite her very young age¹¹⁵ - indicated that, according to the chronicler, the policy of the dynasty was to be shaped in that spirit. The didactic aspect, directed towards Matilda and her brother Otto II, should also be considered.¹¹⁶ Let us believe for a moment that the dedication was not an artificial, yet a subtle measure to reach the ruler and ensure an audience for the chronicler's work. Thus if Widukind had Matilda in mind, he could have assumed that she would learn about the episode of the ancient wars between the Franks and the Saxons

¹¹³ See: G. Althoff, *Widukind von Corvey. Kronzeuge und Herausforderung, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien"* 27 (1993), pp. 257 ff. The historian emphasizes that, apart from the introductions to each of the three books, the references to Matilda scattered throughout the text of the chronicle indicate that Widukind really saw in the young abbess a future diligent reader of the work - *ibidem*, pp. 267.

¹¹⁴ See: H. Beumann, *Historiographische Konzeption...*, pp. 880-881. Cf. information on Widukind's use of the phrase *Francia Saxoniaque*, on juxtaposing Franks and Saxons in the story of the times of Henry I and Otto I in: Wolfgang Eggert, "*Franken und Sachsen*" bei Notker, *Widukind und anderen*, in: *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. A. Scharer, G. Scheibelreiter, Wien-München 1994, pp. 524 ff.; cf. B. Patzöld in: W. Egger, B. Patzöld, *Wir-Gefühl...*, pp. 206-207.

¹¹⁵ G. Althoff, *Widukind...*, p. 262.

¹¹⁶ H. Keller, *Widukinds Bericht...*, p. 453. On the dedication in the context of the discussion on the time of creation of Widukind's work: M. Lintzel, *Die Entstehungszeit von Widukinds Sachsengeschichte, "Sachsen und Anhalt"* 17 (1941/43), pp. 1-13, reprinted in: M. Lintzel, *Ausgewählte Schriften*, vol. 2: *Zur Karolinger- und Ottonenzeit, zum hohen und späten Mittelalter, zur Literaturgeschichte*, Berlin 1961, pp. 302-311. Recently more on this topic: A. Brakhman, *Außenseiter und 'Insider'. Kommunikation und Historiografie im Umfeld des ottonischen Herrscherhofes*, Husum 2016 (= *Historische Studien* 509), pp. 175-194.

anyway, just because her grandmother and namesake could trace her lineage back to the line of chieftain Widukind. And since he did not want to be considered a liar, his play with the audience - both the specified and the implicit - was based on a simple message: "I, the chronicler, am showing you what is important for the future, and you will learn other things from songs and legends, the content of which I do not contradict."

Further in the chronicle the relationship between the Saxons and the Franks was interpreted in terms of friendship and equal status of both peoples.¹¹⁷ However, Widukind took a kind of historiographic revenge on the Franks by emphasizing their weaknesses. Such overtones can be found in the story about the translation of Saint Dionysius' relics donated to the East Frankish ruler, Henry I, by the West Frankish king, Charles III. Charles's envoy, who delivered the relics, allegedly complained in his speech that ever since the Franks had disposed of the relics of another saint, Saint Vitus, in favor of the Saxons, a permanent peace had reigned in Saxony, whereas in Gaul, inhabited by the Franks, there had been invasions by the Normans and Danes since that same year, and from then on, both external and internal wars had never ceased.¹¹⁸

Immediately afterwards, Widukind introduces the plot concerning Saint Vitus - the patron saint of his own monastery, also nominated as the patron saint of the Saxons - and recalls his translation to Saxony during the reign of Louis the Pious. He then proclaims that by honoring that patron, Saxony, once a servant, became free, and from a tributary, it became the lady of many peoples.¹¹⁹ Thus, he transfers to Vitus the qualities that he previously attributed to Dionysius.¹²⁰ The most interesting fact is that the entire

117 J. Ehlers in: *Schriftkultur, Ethnogenese und Nationsbildung in ottonischer Zeit*, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 23 (1989), p. 305, recognizes, however, that Widukind, somewhat differently from Hrotswitha or the hagiographers of Queen Matilda, succumbs to the overwhelming authority of the Carolingian tradition and reveals the shortcomings of the new Saxon self-awareness hidden behind the constant labeling of the state as Frankish. Note 13 ibidem - indication of places where Widukind uses this Frankish identification of the kingdom.

118 Widukind I, 33, p. 46: a fragment of the alleged speech of Charles's envoy: "Hanc partem unci solatii Francorum Galliam inhabitantium, postquam nos deseruit insignis martyr Vitus ad nostrum perniciem vestram que perpetuam pacem Saxoniam visitavit, communicare tecum maluit. Neque enim, postquam translatus est corpus eius a nobis, civilia vel externa cessare bella; eodem quippe anno Dani et Northmanni regionem nostrum invaserunt".

119 Widukind I, 34, p. 48: "Colito itaque tantum patronum, quo adveniente Saxonia ex serva facta est libera et ex tributariam ultarum gentium domina".

120 On Widukind's motives - K.H. Krüger, *Dionysius...*, p. 152. It is interesting whether Widukind knew the tradition of the abbot of Saint Denis Fardulf who, with the relics of saints venerated in the abbey, participated in one of Charlemagne's expeditions against the Saxons, contributing to his success. In the middle of the 9th century, the author of the miracles of St. Dionysius wrote about it - *De S. Dionysii ejusque sociorum Rustici et Eleutherii cultu reliquiarum*

previous narrative did not inform at all how Saxony fell into that subordinate and demeaning status of a servant and a tributary, or when it took place. And yet, Widukind recalls that time, succumbing to the rhetorical temptation of contrasting the glory of his people, which he saw and praised, with the actual or alleged downfall they previously experienced. The miserable fate of the Franks - and their king Charles (the Simple) in this particular story - represents, in his account, the reversal of the fortune of the Saxons. Openly addressing the princess, Widukind further states that the affairs of the Franks began to falter, while those of the Saxons began to improve.¹²¹ It would not be an exaggeration to assume that Widukind was pleased to convince himself and his readers that the Franks - no one else could fit the role of the lord's servant and recipient of the tribute - earned their just reward. The transfer of Saint Vitus' relics completed the process of the Christianization of Saxony but also annihilated its accompanying political effect, which was the subjugating of the Saxons and assigning them a servile role, inappropriate for a people endowed with such great martial virtues.¹²² The transfer of the relics became the culmination of liberation, and, at the same time, the transfer of prosperity and power.¹²³ The message of both these chapters, essentially consistent, does not lose its strength due to their inclusion

translationibus miraculisque seculo VII posterioribus (BHL 2202), c. 11-12, *Acta Sanctorum Octobris* 4, Bruxelles 1780, p. 933, col. A-B: „Insignis non tantum gloria, verum et potentia Karolus cum bellum adversus Saxones susceptum, contra quamgentem a Francos diu animos eque pugnatum est, memorabilia industria administraret, sui praesentia vires exercitus acuens, Fardulfum, qui, Magenariorum luce excedente, coenobio Sanctorum regendo successerat, inter alios, qui adferendum pondus praelii et gentis audaciam comprimenda me vocati undique conduxerant, contigit adfuisse. Hic pignora beatorum Martyrum secum ferri fecerat, et custodes clericos, qui secum proficiscebantur, delegaverat, uti eis vicissim sibi succedentibus debita exhiberetur religio”.

121 Widukind I, 34, p. 48: “res Francorum coeperunt minui, Saxonum vero crescere donec dilatate ipsa sua iam magnitudine laborant ut videmus in amore mundi et totius orbis capite patro tuo, cuius potentiam et maiestatem non solum Germania, Italia atque Gallia, sed tota fere Europa non sustinet”.

122 B. Schneidmüller, *Widukind von Corvey, Richer von Reims und der Wandel politischen Bewußtseins im 10. Jahrhundert*, in: *Beiträge zur mittelalterlichen Reichs- und Nationsbildung in Deutschland und Frankreich* (“Historische Zeitschrift”, Beiheft, N.F., 24), ed. C. Brühl, B. Schneidmüller, München 1997, 83-102, p. 86: “In der Geschichte von Heiligen und Reliquien kristallisiert sich für ihn das Verhältnis von Franken und Sachsen, das über blasse Ansätze einer wirklichen Beziehungsgeschichte kaum hinauskommt. Reliquientranslationen begründen das nachlassende Glück der Franken und den wachsenden Erfolg der Sachsen...”. On the relationship between the Saxons and the Franks in Widukind's work, cf. H. Beumann, *Widukind...*, pp. 218-219.

123 Hence the opinion on the entire chronicle as in Bernhard Zeller, *Liudolfinger als fränkische Könige? Überlegungen zur sogenannten Continuatio Reginonis*, in: *Texts and Identities in the Early Middle Ages* (“Forschungen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters” 12), ed. R. Corradini, R. Meens, Ch. Pössel, Ph. Shaw, Wien 2006, p. 138: “Das Werk ist zurecht als eine Befreiungsgeschichte des sächsischen Volkes gelesen worden”. Cf. H. Mayr-Harting, *Charlemagne...*, p. 1129.

in the middle of the narrative about the triumphs of Henry I, especially considering the later reference to Matilda, Otto's daughter, which led historians to speculate that it was originally intended as part of the dedication of the work.¹²⁴ On the contrary, the triumphs of Henry prove the overcoming of all past weaknesses. There is also a, one might say, dialectical connection between them and the events from the time of Charlemagne. Using innuendos and conjectures, Widukind indeed places the time when Saxony became a servant, but without any doubt he believes that it was thanks to the conversion to Christianity and the connection of the Saxons with the Franks, achieved through the efforts of Charlemagne, that contemporary triumphs became possible.¹²⁵

Enslavement - how else to call the act of making someone a servant? - gained meaning as a condition and prelude to elevation. Evidently, an alternative interpretation could be proposed, seemingly adhering to a more orthodox path: it was still pagan Saxony that was the servant, it served false gods. However, since Widukind associated the transformation of status not with the acceptance of Christianity itself, but specifically with the translation of particular relics, we must adhere to the political rather than the religious dimension of those statements. This interpretation is also reinforced by the passage concerning the triumphs of Otto I, where the chronicler strongly emphasizes the theme of the Saxons gaining dominion over other peoples.¹²⁶

The phrase about the servant who becomes free and the reference in the first chapters of the chronicle through the words *socii et amicii*, *societas* and *amicitia* to the relations between the Saxons and the Franks, allegedly established in the old days and renewed by the efforts of Charles, may, as noted by Hagen Keller,¹²⁷ refer to the same source. Its character and the context of the references would then acquire a particularly noble character since these are fragments from passages in the biblical First Book of Maccabees, as perceived by Widukind as well as other authors from that time, in the Latin version of the Vulgate. In the first case (1 Maccabees 2:11), in the speech of Mattathias, Israel, oppressed by pagans, is compared to a free person who has been made a servant. In Widukind's account, the transformation goes

124 K.H. Krüger, *Dionysius...*, p. 136.

125 Cf. H. Beumann, *Einhard...*, p. 170.

126 Widukind II, 6, p. 71: "Saxones imperio regis facti gloriosi dedignabantur aliis servire nationibus quaesturas que quas habuerunt ullius alii nisi solius regis gratia contempserunt".

127 H. Keller, *Machabeorum pugnae. Zum Stellenwert eines biblischen Vorbilds in Widukinds Deutung der ottonischen Königsherrschaft*, in: *Iconologia sacra. Mythos, Bildkunst und Dichtung in der Religions- und Sozialgeschichte Alteuropas. Festschrift für Karl Hauck zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Keller, N. Staubach, Berlin-New York 1994 (= *Arbeiten zur Frühmittelalterforschung* 23), p. 427 and footnotes 64 and 66 with references to places from the biblical text. *Amicitia* was by no means an equal relationship - E. Karpf, *Herrscherlegitimation...*, p. 147.

in the opposite direction, but his words implicitly presuppose a prior falling into slavery. Thus, the Saxons would be compared to the people of Israel, and the transformations concerning religion, being the essence of the biblical (potential) prototype, would provide an unspoken background for the historiosophical interpretation of the monk from Corvey: the Saxon enslavement means life under false gods, without a real guardian who is a saint who intercedes with God.

In turn, the alliance and friendship, in the Vulgate *amicitia et societas*, are words used multiple times in the Book of Maccabees to describe the relationship between the state liberated from the Antiochian tyranny, under the leadership of Judas Maccabeus and the Romans (1 Maccabees 8:17; 12:3, 10, and 14; 15:17). The multiplicity of other loanwords¹²⁸ makes it likely that there is no coincidence here, even if this pair of concepts became trivialized in the political language of the era. Perhaps, therefore, Widukind wanted to suggest that the once dominant Franks and the always brave Saxons were a pair analogous to the Romans - masters of the world and the Israelites who were so brave under their Maccabean brothers. This kind of use of a biblical text may have served the writer's purpose of alleviating the pain inflicted on Saxon pride by the concealed wound of the Frankish conquest. However, even if treated with omissions, that the story of that conquest gives meaning to the narrative about the emancipation of the Saxon people.¹²⁹

Another idea from Widukind's work also deserves consideration within the scope of this analysis. Describing Otto the Great's victory over the Hungarians at Lechfeld, the chronicler stated that no king had achieved such a great victory in the past 200 years.¹³⁰ This period included the reign of Charlemagne. Therefore, the chronicler indirectly regarded the victory of the Saxon ruler as overshadowing everything achieved militarily by the Frankish king and emperor.¹³¹ It is intriguing to what extent the martial glory and, consequently, the figure of Charles the Great served as a reference point for Widukind in shaping the images of the triumphant kings, Henry I and Otto I, in relation to their victories over the Hungarians.¹³² Furthermore, Hrotswitha of Gandersheim was

128 H. Keller, *Machabeorum pugnae...*, passim. The scholar warns against treating each of Widukind's alleged use of phrases from the Book of Maccabees as related to a specific ideological intention - p. 428.

129 The emancipation of the Saxons as one of Widukind's leitmotifs and a process extending to the beginning of the rule of Otto I - E. Karpf, *Herrscherlegitimation...*, pp. 146, 147.

130 Widukind III, 49, p. 129: "Neque enim tanta Victoria quisquam regum intra ducentos annos ante eum letatus est".

131 H. Keller, *Widukinds Bericht...*, footnote 359, p. 450.

132 More on the role of narratives about the victories of Henry and Otto over Hungary in Ottonian historiography, cf. A. Grabowski, *The Construction of Ottonian Kingship. Narratives and Myth in Tenth-Century Germany*, Amsterdam 2018, pp. 197-222.

also ready to place Otto, whose deeds she celebrated, above all past emperors - including Charlemagne.¹³³

The anonymous author (or perhaps authoress - a nun from the monastery in Nordhausen or Quedlinburg) of the first version of *Life of Queen Matilda*, dedicated to Otto II, shares with Widukind the admiration for the Saxon - or in his/her view, Germanic - triumphs of their time.¹³⁴ Written a few years after the work of the monk from Corvey, this piece similarly presents the origin of the heroine.¹³⁵ However, in this account, the leader Widukind is depicted as initially a pagan, deeply devoted to the cult of demons, since there were no true faith teachers in Saxony at that time, and as one who persecuted Christians. Against him, the virtuous Emperor Charlemagne stood up in the matter of defending the faith, *defendendae causa fidei*, as he always used to fight pagans for this reason. The two leaders engaged in a direct duel, which God, moved by the tears of the Christians, settled in favor of Charlemagne.¹³⁶ The defeated Widukind decided to submit himself to the king's authority and to the Christian faith, along with his entire family and army. The emperor had Saint Boniface himself baptize Widukind. From then on, the former persecutor became the most ardent worshipper of Christ, erecting chapels (*cellulas*) and furnishing them with relics and everything else needed. He also established the well-known chapel in Enger,¹³⁷ which

133 Hrotswitha, *Gesta Ottonis*, prolog, v. 4, p. 202: "Augustos omnes superas pietate priores". Cf. E. Karpf, *Herrscherlegitimation...*, p. 136, footnote 138.

134 *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, in: *Die Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde*, ed. B. Schütte, in: MGH SS rer. Germ. 66, Hannover 1994, pp. 107-142. The topic of Widukind as the ancestor of Queen Matilda is also analyzed in: R. Michałowski, *Genealogie Kingi i innych świętych władczyń w średniowieczu. Studium hagiograficzne*, „Kwartalnik Historyczny” 127 (2020), 4, pp. 817-818. On the possible interdependencies between Matilda's *Life* and Widukind's chronicle, cf. S. Gilsdorf, *Queenship...*, pp. 16 ff.

135 *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 1, p. 113. A comprehensive study on Matilda's genealogical relationships with Charlemagne's opponent, cf. K. Schmid, *Nachfahren...*, pp. 11 ff. The Immedings and the descendants of Widukind in Saxony in the 9th and 10th centuries: cf. also R. Wenskus, *Sächsische Stammesadel und fränkische Reichsadel*, Göttingen 1976, pp. 115-155 and 156-177 respectively.

136 *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 1, p. 113: "Cumque simul convenissent, utrisque placuit principibus, ut ipsi singuli invicem dimicaturi consurgerent, et cui sors victoriam contulisset, ipsi totus exercitus sine dubio pareret. Quibus congressis ac diu multumque concertantibus, tandem Dominus lacrimis pulsates christianorum, fideli suo bellatori de hoste concessit triumphum".

137 *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 2, p. 114: "Ille vero relicto errore credulus ad agnitionem Veritatis penitendo sponte pervenit, et sicut prius persecutor destructorque pertinax fuit ecclesie, deinde christianissimus ecclesiarum et dei extitit cultor, ita ut ipse singulas totis viribus studendo construeret cellulas, quas plurimis sanctorum reliquiis nec non ceteris perfectas relinquebat utilitatibus, quarum una multis adhuc nota remanet Aggerinensis dicta...". More on the fact that the tradition cultivated in Enger and reflected in the biographies of Queen Mathilda strongly influenced the ideas about Widukind's fate after 785 and how unreliable it is, cf. G. Althoff, *Der Sachsenherzog Widukind als Monch auf der Reichenau*, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 17 (1983), pp. 253 ff. and 273 ff.

remained known even at the time of the creation of the text. As previously noted, this transformation in Widukind (as the hagiographer put it: *mentis mutatio*) resembles the conversion of Saul to Paul.¹³⁸

In this depiction, instead of a prolonged war, there is a duel, and Widukind's baptism is equated with the baptism of the entire Saxon people, represented by his army, further dignified by the figure of Boniface.¹³⁹ Analyzing the account, Helmut Beumann recognized the suggestion that it was not the weapons but the Christian God who decided about the victory as part of the strategy of reconciliation between the Saxons and the Franks, present in the works of Saxon authors since the 9th century.¹⁴⁰ In this analysis the emphasis on Boniface's Anglo-Saxon origin and Frisian martyrdom is less convincing - personal details were probably less important here than the unquestionable apostolic reputation of the saint himself, which did not need to be traced indirectly as in the case of Charlemagne. Boniface, in the author's account of Queen Matilda's Life, is a complementary figure, not competitive with Charlemagne. The role of godfather fulfilled by Charlemagne created a bond between him and Widukind, which the author of the later version of Matilda's Life, from the time of Henry II, likened to a cordial friendship.¹⁴¹

The tale of the duel (regardless of whether it derives from some oral epic tradition or not¹⁴²) leads to the recognition of the equivalence of Charlemagne and Widukind, but also the recognition of the military equality between the Franks and the Saxons. The baptism of Widukind and the Saxons removes the last reason to assume any inequality.¹⁴³

The anonymous author, let us emphasize it again, suggested that it was not so much Charlemagne and the Franks who defeated the Saxons, but God Himself. This kind of shift was already gaining popularity in the 10th century in the historiography developing under the auspices of the Saxon Liudolfing dynasty. At this point it is worth mentioning the *Antapodosis* by Liudprand of Cremona.

Liudprand's approach deserves special attention. He was an author writing about Saxon affairs from the perspective of an outsider.¹⁴⁴ This meant, on

138 S. Gilsdorf, *Queenship...*, p. 47.

139 H. Beumann, *Sachsen...*, pp. 900-901.

140 Ibidem, p. 900.

141 *Vita Mathildis reginae (posterior)*, in: *Die Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde*, ed. B. Schütte, in: MGH SS rer. Germ. 66, Hannover 1994, c. 2, p. 149: "[Charles and Widukind] per consanguinitatem fidei postea fuerunt concordēs amici".

142 B. Pätzold, W. Eggert, *i.a.*, acknowledged this possibility (*Wir-Gefühl...*, p. 251).

143 Cf. E. Karpf, *Herrscherlegitimation...*, p. 193.

144 As a man who was involved in the creation of Ottonian historiography from outside, Liudprand became the subject of interest and analysis in the already quoted monograph by A. Brakhman, *Außenseiter...*

the one hand, dependence on the interpretation developed within the Saxon circle, but on the other hand, perhaps greater liberty in its use. In his text it is not unfounded to see a reflection of a mature, deeply ingrained Saxon interpretation of those events. The lens of the author from northern Italy sharpens some of its elements.

Liudprand began his description of Henry I's great victory over the Hungarians with a poem containing references to earlier history. He portrayed the Saxons as a warlike people who became famous for nearly defeating Charlemagne. Liudprand even wrote about Charlemagne's initial defeat and escape. However, Charlemagne eventually won because it was God's will for the Saxons to gain eternal life.¹⁴⁵ Furthermore, Liudprand contrasted the Saxons with the evil Turks, who fought against God and took pleasure in killing His people. This time, during Henry I's reign, God destined the warrior Saxons to destroy the pagan hordes and send them to hell. This short poem embedded in the prosaic text of *Antapodosis* ends with a fervent call to fight the Hungarians.

The Saxons were juxtaposed with the Hungarians on the principle of parallel and contrast. They both shared military qualities and, during the period of wars between the Saxons and Charlemagne, the former adhered to their pagan worship. However, the Saxons proved to be a people chosen by God in two historical situations: first, their calling was to participate in salvation, and then to defeat the Hungarians.¹⁴⁶ Even their strength and valor played a role in the history of salvation.¹⁴⁷

The intriguing theme of Charlemagne's temporary defeat in the fight against the Saxons, and even his flight from the battlefield, found its unexpected development in the work of a later generation author, *i.e.*, Thietmar of Merseburg. The chronicler, while narrating Emperor Henry II's visit to Frankfurt in the year 1017, deemed it necessary to enlighten his reader about the origin of the name of this city. Referring to what he heard from credible people ("a credulibus viris audivi"), he mentioned how Charlemagne's men waged wars with "our ancestors". On one occasion, the Franks were "defeated by our troops", fleeing and searching in vain for a suitable ford across the river Main. Eventually, a doe showed them a safe passage, and that's how the name "Franks' ford" originated. Charles himself also fled - Thietmar puts in his mouth an explanation of why he preferred to escape with his life

145 Liudprand, *Antapodosis*, in: *Die Werke Liudprands von Cremona*, ed. J. Becker, in: MGH SS rer. Germ. 41, Hannover-Leipzig 1915, II, 26, p. 50: "Inclita Saxonum/ Ceu leo frendens//Bella per innumera/ Gens erat olim// Resitit haec Karolo,/ Ense cruento// Qui sibimet totum/ Straverat orbem// Fugit hic victus/ Victor ubique// Quod sibi nos rediens/ Subdidit omnes// Id Domini pietas/Gessit, ob hoc quod// Participes voluit/ Esse salutis".

146 A. Grabowski, *Construction...*, p. 202.

147 E. Karpf, *Herrscherlegitimation...*, p. 24.

rather than perish on the battlefield.¹⁴⁸ This narrative entirely lacks the presence of the leader Widukind and the conversion of the Saxons. And this is an approach with understatements in the style of Widukind the chronicler.

Nothing more is known about this Frankfurt-related tradition, but Thietmar in his account clearly prides himself in the fact that “our people” defeated Charlemagne and his Franks. Similarly, the contemporary author (or authoress) of the *Annals of Quedlinburg*, in the part concerning the time of Charlemagne, selectively reports on his Saxon wars, not omitting any of the documented successes of the Saxons¹⁴⁹ found in its underlying sources, i.e., contemporary Frankish annals.

Queen Matilda’s first hagiographer did what the monk from Corvey had omitted: portrayed *Dux* Widukind not only as a figure resisting the Frankish ruler but also as one who leads his people from paganism to Christianity, to the right side, and found a place for him among the victors despite the apparent defeat.¹⁵⁰ Regardless of whether the emphasis on the converted leader’s foundational activity in the text, produced in the circle of the late Matilda, reflected the tradition of his descendants, who were active (like Matilda herself) in this field and pursued ecclesiastical and monastic careers, or not,¹⁵¹ the historical role attributed to Widukind could have been shaped in the Saxon tradition within much broader circles than just the hero’s fellow countrymen. The question arises as to whether the narrative about Widukind in Queen Matilda’s hagiography is dominated by the perspective of the Saxon people, the perspective of the queen’s lineage, or perhaps the perspective of the Ottonian court? The courtly perspective is evident in the device of personalizing the war: Charlemagne confronted Widukind, and a duel was fought. This already paved the way for turning the theme

¹⁴⁸ *Thietmari Merseburgensis Episcopi Chronicon*, ed. R. Holtzmann, MGH SS rer. Germ. NS 9, Berlin 1935, lib. 7, c. 75, p. 490.

¹⁴⁹ It was pointed out to by H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, p. 81.

¹⁵⁰ In the depiction of Widukind in Matilda’s Life Roman Michałowski saw a model for later rulers - R. Michałowski, *Genealogie...*, p. 823; and even stronger, pp. 839-840: the epic history of Widukind - a great warrior, evangelizer and church founder, written with grandiloquence, constituted a promise and a reason for the virtues that characterized his descendants. On the one hand, they were great conquerors, on the other hand, they were distinguished by piety.

¹⁵¹ In the historiography, Widukind’s descendants included as many as 8 bishops of the 9th and 10th centuries and several other clergymen and monks known by name - although in no case, apart from his great-grandson in direct line, Wicbert, bishop of Verden in the second half of the 9th century and at the beginning of the 10th century, this is directly confirmed by the sources - K. Schmid, *Nachfahren...*, pp. 36-39. On their foundation activity see C. Ehlers, *Die Integration...*, pp. 164-170. Their ecclesiastical careers confirmed a kind of personnel self-sufficiency of the Saxon dioceses - in the 9th century, it was rare for someone from outside the region to become a bishop, also because poorly endowed dioceses were not so attractive to ambitious clergymen from the outside who enjoyed the support of the court - Ch. Carrol, *The bishopric...*, pp. 233-236.

into epic tales that could find eager listeners, especially in courtly circles. On a more general level, the approach reconciled acceptance of Charlemagne's victory and its far-reaching consequences with praise for the strength and valor of the Saxons, and, indeed, their resistance.¹⁵²

By the late 10th and early 11th centuries, descent from Widukind already carried an ennobling connotation. Thietmar drew a further conclusion from this and called Matilda's ancestor a king.¹⁵³ By the 13th century, texts appeared in which genealogy of the Liudolfings or the Welfs was traced back to Widukind.¹⁵⁴

At the same time, it seems that Widukind was not so important in living tradition and was still waiting for a lasting place in the pantheon of historical Germanic and German heroes, alongside Arminius-Hermann, the victor of the Roman legions in the Teutoburg Forest (a status that was strengthened in the early modern era).¹⁵⁵

In the older *Life of Queen Matilda*, another theme draws attention from the perspective of our topic. The hagiographer, praising the fact that after the Frankish King Conrad (this title was used twice) - came such a remarkable ruler as Matilda's husband Henry, states that the Saxons received a king they had never had before. He immediately turns to an invocation addressed to Germania which had been oppressed by the yoke of other peoples, but it was exalted again as the adornment of the empire, and the narrator urges it to love the king with faithful service and help him in any way it can. He warns that without a prince from this lineage, deprived of honors, it will return to its previous state of subjugation.¹⁵⁶ The passage suggests that for the author, Germania refers to the Saxons, though possibly also to others - thus, we remain in the interpretive tradition of Rudolf of Fulda who applied Tacitus's description

152 P. Johanek, *Fränkische Eroberung und westfälische Identität*, in: *Westfalens Geschichte und die Fremden*, ed. P. Johanek ("Schriften der Historischen Kommission für Westfalen" 40), Münster 1994, p. 31.

153 Thietmari *Chronicon*, lib. 1, c. 9, p. 15 (on Queen Matilda): "... ex Vidicinni regis tribu exortam".

154 For example, a rhymed chronicle from Brunswick in reference to the Welfs, cf. H. Mühlner, *Die Sachsenkriege...*, p. 93. Ibidem, pp. 92-95 and excursus, pp. 96-122, about late-medieval epic transformations of the topic of Charlemagne's wars with the Saxons.

155 On this parallel advancement in the historical memory of Widukind and Arminius, cf. P. Johanek, *Fränkische Eroberung...*, pp. 33-37; also an article first published in 1939: E. Rundnagel, *Die Ursprung der gegenwärtigen Beurteilung Widukinds und Karls der Großen*, republished in the anthology: *Die Eingliederung der Sachsen in das Frankenreich*, ed. W. Lammers, Darmstadt 1970, pp. 91-106.

156 *Vita Mathildis antiquior*, c. 3, p. 117: "O Germania, aliarum prius iugo depressa gentium, sed sublimata modo inperiali decore, regem fideliter serviendo dilige eumque, quantum poteris, iuvare conare, princeps que ne desit ab illo genere, optare ne cesses, ne despoliata gradibus honorum omnibus prioris redeas ad status servitutis!".

of (all) Germans to the Saxons. Yet, this does not apply to the Franks. They are hiding here under the name of the other peoples who oppressed Germania. It was only during Henry's reign that this state of affairs came to an end. The thought is very similar to the one expressed in the text of the chronicler Widukind and may confirm the interdependence of both texts. However, it raises the question of whether the Saxon elites perceived their situation before the year 919 as living under the yoke of slavery or whether it was only under the Ottonians that this interpretation could be made retrospectively. Another explanation should also be added. The topos of *humiliatio-exaltatio*, voluntary humiliation, which precedes elevation performed by God and other people, often applied in stories about individuals, has been applied here to the entire Saxon people. Immediately after that invocation, where subjugation or slavery was mentioned twice, the hagiographer shows the measure of exaltation by writing about Henry's triumphs over the peoples that had never previously been subject to the Saxons.¹⁵⁷

The passages from Widukind's chronicle and those from Queen Matilda's hagiography indicate that by the end of the 10th century, the dynasty could not only claim descent (through the pious queen) from the lineage of the Saxon leader Widukind but also take pride in it. This element of self-awareness must have gone hand in hand with a re-evaluation of the memory of the wars between the Franks and the Saxons. These conflicts began to be perceived, in comparison to the tendencies of the 9th century, as a more equal struggle, in which the Saxons were not far from victory - one could even venture to say that they almost won - but God ultimately took away that triumph from them on the ground of their paganism.

If, from the perspective of modern science or criticism, Charlemagne could be branded as the executioner or butcher of the Saxons (as mentioned at the end of this paper), Saxon authors were able to find a completely different role for him - precisely in relation to their people. Around 980 AD, in the monastery of Werden on the Ruhr River, in the midst of the then Saxon lands, a monk of Frisian origin, named Uffing, composed the hagiography of Saint Ida. According to tradition, the heroine was the niece of the emperor and the wife of the Saxon count Egbert. From the first words of the first chapter, the reader could learn that the most victorious Charles ruled happily: over the scepters of the Saxons and the Franks (precisely in that order) and the reins of many other nations.¹⁵⁸ According to the hagiographer,

157 Ibidem.

158 *Vita S. Idae*, in: R. Wilmans, *Die Kaiserurkunden der Provinz Westfalen 777-1313*. 1: *Die Urkunden des Karolingischen Zeitalters 777-900*, Münster 1867, c. 1, p. 471: "Eo tempore quo victoriosissimus imperator Carolus Saxonum et Francorum sceptram ultarumque gentium frena feliciter gubernabat". Cf. on this fragment: H. Beumann, *Sachsen...*, pp. 896 and 905-906.

Charlemagne thus united the two mentioned peoples into the leaders of a larger community, giving them a superior role in relation to all others. With such examples, the statement made by the already quoted Helmut Beumann about the growing identification of the destiny of their people with Charlemagne in the works of Saxon authors becomes understandable.¹⁵⁹

Bruno of Querfurt, a Saxon aristocrat born around the time when Widukind wrote his work, undoubtedly raised with knowledge of Saxon tradition, a clergyman, missionary, bishop, and writer, referred twice in his texts to the figure of Charlemagne, using almost identical words.¹⁶⁰ Both works were created in the first decade of the 11th century. In the *Life of Saint Adalbert* (more precisely – in its longer version, considered to be original), the context of mentioning Charles is the uprising of the Lutici breaking free from the yoke of Christianity (referring to the events of 983 and subsequent years).¹⁶¹ Bruno held the then Emperor Otto II responsible for this catastrophe – by juxtaposing it with other disasters allegedly perpetually suffered by the ruler. In Bruno's view, Otto either fought against other Christian princes, destroying the bonds of brotherhood, or fought against pagans to acquire land, not to propagate the Christian faith. In addition, he listened to a woman's persuasions and childish advice. Otto showed no zeal in converting pagans, and thus represented the rulers of his age, among whom few, after the holy emperor, the great Constantine, and after Charlemagne – the ideal model of piety, undertook the task of converting pagans. For the times that Bruno writes about and in which he lives, harassment of Christians is to be more frequent than forcing pagans to enter the Church – the latter is considered by the writer to be a desirable state. And even if wars with pagans occur – like Otto II against the Saracens – they are waged for lands, not for Christ.¹⁶²

A few years later, Bruno wrote a letter addressed to King Henry II.¹⁶³ He recounted his missionary efforts, and then proceeded to an emotional

159 H. Beumann, *Sachsen...*, p. 897.

160 On the ideas permeating Bruno's works cf. R. Wenskus, *Studien zur historisch-politischen Gedankenwelt Bruns von Querfurt*, Münster-Köln 1956, passim. On the missionary aspect: H.-D. Kahl, *Compellere intrare. Die Wendenpolitik des Bruns von Querfurt im Lichte des hochmittelalterlichen Missions- und Völkerrechts*, in: *Heidenmission und Kreuzzugsgedanke in der deutschen Ostpolitik des Mittelalter*, ed. H. Beumann, Darmstadt 1963, pp. 177-274, reprinted in: H.-D. Kahl, *Heidenfrage und Slawenfrage im deutschen Mittelalter. Ausgewählte Studien 1953-2008*, Leiden-Boston 2011, pp. 483-564, quoted below from the reprint.

161 *Sancti Adalberti Pragensis, episcopi et martyris Vita altera auctore Bruno Querfurtensis*, ed. J. Karwasińska, Monumenta Poloniae Historica s.n. 4/2, Warszawa 1969, c. 10, pp. 8-10.

162 *Sancti Adalberti Vita altera*, c. 10, p. 9: "Quod si augendae christianitatis gratia non terrae causa cecidissent tanti boni...". On Bruno's condemnation of wars for the land, cf. R. Wenskus, *Studien...*, pp. 153, 159-160.

163 Edition: *Epistola Brunonis ad Henricum regem*, ed. J. Karwasińska, Monumenta Poloniae Historica s.n. 4/3, Warszawa 1973; introduction, pp. 87-93, contains information about

discourse on the addressee's policy. He condemned Henry's alliance with the pagan Lutici, a kind of brotherhood in arms between the pagan, Svantevit, and the Christian martyr, Maurice, formed against the Polish Prince, Bolesław. He condemned Henry's war against that Christian ruler, who was ready to engage in the conversion of the Prussians. He reproached Henry for not waging war against the Lutici and not compelling them, as commanded by the Gospel, to join the Church. By doing so, he would have contributed to the growth of the Church and gained the title of an apostle before God.¹⁶⁴ And here, the phrase about the holy Emperor Constantine and the best model of piety, Charlemagne, is used again. In the present unfortunate times there is hardly anyone like them who would convert a pagan, and instead there are those who persecute a Christian.¹⁶⁵

Each time, Bruno places Constantine the Great - by virtue of his power, and his edicts Christianizing the Roman Empire - on the same level as Charlemagne.¹⁶⁶ He contrasts them, as positive examples, with Otto II, Henry II, and other rulers of his time. Resigning from historical depth, he thus appeals to the knowledge and associations familiar to his intended recipient, listener, or reader of the Life of Saint Adalbert and the letter to King Henry - who certainly did not have to be just that last ruler, otherwise considered well-educated.

The context and the contrasts allow us to deduce without much risk how Bruno perceived Charlemagne. Thus, he was a ruler who did not fight against other Christians. He was a ruler who converted pagans and "compelled them to enter" (*compellere intrare*, a phrase from the Vulgate translation of St. Luke 14:23), a ruler who undertook apostolic efforts. The text does not suggest other dimensions of Charles's exemplary piety. The only events from Charlemagne's history that seem to fit this characterization relate to the wars aimed at converting the Saxons. Bruno knows that Charlemagne waged wars against pagans, although he does not name them. He reveals

the manuscript, editions, and early discussion related to the work. Recent content analysis - see i.a., R. Michałowski, *Misjonarz i pan misji we wczesnym średniowieczu*, in: *Lustro. Teksty o kulturze średniowiecza ofiarowane Halinie Manikowskiej*, ed. W. Brojer, Warszawa 2013, pp. 49-51. About the time of the creation of this "unfinished" text see: M. Sosnowski, *Kilka uwag o chronologii życia i twórczości Brunona z Kwerfurtu*, "Roczniki Historyczne" 82 (2016), pp. 75-76.

164 *Epistola Brunonis ad Henricum regem*, pp. 101-104.

165 Ibidem, p. 104: "Eheu nostra infelicia tempora! Post santum imperatorem magnum Constantinum, post exemplar religionis optimum Carolum, est nunc qui persequatur christianum, nemo prope qui convertat paganum".

166 This kind of juxtaposition had already begun during the lifetime and reign of Charles, perhaps in papal Rome, and from the beginning included references to protection of the papacy and the conversion of pagan peoples - K. Hauck, *Die Ausbreitung des Glaubens in Sachsen und die Verteidigung der römischen Kirche als konkurrierende Herrscheraufgaben Karls des Großen*, "Frühmittelalterliche Studien" 4 (1970), pp. 169-172.

that the tradition of forcefully imposing the new faith here, in his native Saxony (after all, not in distant Spain), was known to him, was absorbed and fully accepted by him. This knowledge did not need to be deep; it did not necessarily include familiarity with the famous draconian capitulary *De partibus Saxoniae*.¹⁶⁷ It is worth recalling that the monastic name he adopted, Boniface, referred to the saint known as the apostle of Germania.¹⁶⁸ Bruno considered the act of Christianization of the Saxons to be deeply right. What Charlemagne did to the Saxons was subordinated to the great purpose of spreading the Gospel and fulfilled the command contained therein.

Bruno's view did not develop in intellectual isolation. Otto III, who preceded Henry II, seemed to consider Charles as an apostolic ruler - and he himself sought to refer to that aspect of his policy. In the contemporary *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, Charlemagne was called *Saxonum apostolus*.¹⁶⁹ The missionary legend of Charlemagne, which served earlier 10th-century authors as a metaphorical healing of the wounds once inflicted on Saxon pride, had already emancipated itself from that context and was meant to serve the creation of a new policy towards the Slavs, Prussians, and other still pagan peoples. This was true both in the case of Otto III and in the case of Bruno of Querfurt, who granted emperors a significant role in the missionary work.¹⁷⁰ It is worth noting that Thietmar of Merseburg, a representative of the same generation as Bruno, also mentions Charlemagne as a model and measure for comparison - in the context of praising Otto I - but focuses only on the aspect of exemplary state leadership and its defense.¹⁷¹

In Saxony, the emphasis on Charles's religious motifs, just as it served to spare the pride of the Saxon elite, also led to the acceptance of conversion with the use of violence. His example provided an obligation for the rulers of Bruno's time, perhaps also an obligation for a missionary war, in which case Bruno would appear as one of the pioneers.¹⁷² In fact, his acceptance of the use of violence in the spirit of Augustine of Hippo's, and Gregory the Great's, interpretation of the passage from the Gospel of Luke referred to the recognized apostates - the Lutices. For Bruno, they were a justified target

167 H.-D. Kahl, *Compellere intrare...*, p. 536.

168 R. Wenskus, *Studien...*, p. 147.

169 *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, s.a. 814, p. 440: "Carolus, imperator magnus et Saxonum apostolus... obiit".

170 R. Wenskus, *Studien...*, p. 143.

171 *Thietmari Chronicon*, lib. 2, c. 45, p. 92: "post Carolum Magnum regale cathedram numquam tantus patriae rector atque defensor possedit". A comparison of this kind also provides evidence of reasoning rooted in terms of the unity of the Franks and the Saxons and treating both peoples as co-hosts of the state.

172 R. Wenskus, *Studien...*, pp. 147-148.

of attack.¹⁷³ At the same time, any potential triumph over the Slavs erased or obscured the resentment resulting from the submission to Frankish dominance several generations earlier.

Widukind and Bruno of Querfurt did not elaborate on the resistance of the Saxons to Charlemagne and Christianity. It is interesting, however, that this theme emerged in another historiographical tradition. More than 100 years later, the chronicler known as Gallus Anonymous, who recorded the history of Polish princes, decided to include a legend about the origin of the Prussian people in his narrative.¹⁷⁴ In the story he quoted the most adamant section of the Saxons who did not accept Charlemagne's conquest, sailed eastward from their homeland, and it was they who gave rise to the Prussians. The legend allowed Gallus to explain two questions in his account: why the Prussians were pagans and why they vehemently resisted Christianity represented by his hero, Bolesław Krzywousty (the Wrymouth). Their fierceness was inherited from their Saxon ancestors. Gallus also used the same cliché with reference to the Saxons, as well as other barbarians, while portraying the alleged descendants of the exiles as living without a king and without law.¹⁷⁵

Why is this kind of remnant of tradition, which emerged outside the area of the Saxon community, relevant for our topic? It seems to, paradoxically, reflect the success of the vision created by Widukind and other Saxon authors. First and foremost they attempted to accentuate the martial virtues of their people and in Widukind's work this approach is evident in all the narratives of the legendary part. This tone is also present in one of the alternative versions of the origin of the Saxons, making them descendants of Alexander the Great's soldiers scattered around the world.¹⁷⁶ The three great victories: Hathagat over the Thuringians, respectively Henry I's, and Otto I's, over the Hungarians, serve as narrative

173 Ibidem, pp. 150-151. Bruno accepted indirect missionary warfare - not baptism under the threat of the sword but creating conditions for evangelization with the help of war - H.-D. Kahl, *Compellere intrare...*, pp. 536-537.

174 *Galli Anonymi Cronicae et gesta ducum sive principum Polonorum*, ed. C. Maleczyński, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica* n.s. 2, Kraków 1952, lib. II, 42, p. 112.

175 Ibidem: "Adhuc ita sine rege, sine lege persistent, nec a prima perfidia et ferocitate desistunt".

176 Widukind I, 2, p. 4: „Nam super hac re varia opinio est, aliis arbitrantibus de Danis Northmannisque originem duxisse Saxones, aliis autem aestimantibus, ut ipse adolescentulus audivi quondam predicantem, de Graecis, quia ipsi dicerent Saxones reliquias fuisse Macedonici exercitus, qui secutus Magnum Alexandrum inmaturo morte ipsius per totum orbem sit dispersus. Caeterum gentem antiquam et nobilem fuisse non ambigitur". Walter Pohl, *i.a.*, has recently written about the myths of origin, which have a very rich literature, summing up the discussion and presenting the main research problem in *Narratives of Origin and Migration in Early Medieval Europe: Problems of Interpretation*, "The Medieval History Journal" 21 (2018), 2, pp. 192-221.

culminations in each of the three books of his work.¹⁷⁷ Although Bruno was not an author focused on military topics, in his account of Saint Adalbert's life while discussing Otto II's defeats, he stated that this turn of events was unusual for the Germans,¹⁷⁸ thus indicating their military superiority. He also aimed at identifying the Ottonian state with the Saxon one, repeatedly using the term "rex Saxonum"¹⁷⁹ in reference to its rulers. Thus, martial prowess turning into fierceness and displayed even in wars fought "for the wrong cause" became a significant element of the image of the Saxons conveyed by the authors representing a perspective alien to them.

The 20th century brought very distant echoes of the dilemma of how to assess Charlemagne's conquest of the Saxons from their own or their descendants' (real or rather ideological) perspective. Although we omit the entire discussion conducted by scholarly historiography over the centuries, it is worth placing one strong, provocative accent at the end of these considerations. This pertains to the image of Charlemagne in Germany during the Nazi period.¹⁸⁰ In the debate held at that time - outside academic circles, but rather in the influential press of the fascist movement - Charlemagne was portrayed as the "Saxon slaughterer" (*Sachsenschlächter*), waging a war of extermination against the Saxons, treating them no differently than the Spanish Moors.¹⁸¹ At Verden, the site of the massacre of the Saxons by Charles's order in 782, political gatherings were organized, and a monument was erected in their honor. Widukind was equated with Arminius, the victor of the Roman legions in the Teutoburg Forest - and with the Führer himself.¹⁸² However, another trend among intellectuals and historians associated with the regime insisted on glorifying Charlemagne, it also positively assessed his brutality towards the Saxons. The latter trend, supported by Hitler himself from the mid-1930s, emerged victorious, culminating in giving the name "Charlemagne Division" to the last division of the SS formed in the middle phase of the war, in the French form of the emperor's name, as volunteers from France were to be recruited into its ranks.

In conclusion, it is worth emphasizing the change that occurred in the perception of Charlemagne's Saxon wars among Saxon authors. It was

177 N. Wagner, *Irmin in der Sachsen-Origo. Zur Arbeitsweise des Widukind von Corvey*, "Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift" 59 (1978), p. 389.

178 *Sancti Adalberti Vita altera*, c. 10, p. 10: "extra Theutonum consuetudinem pugnantibus eis secundum est omne infortunium".

179 Cf. W. Eggert, B. Pätzold, *Wir-Gefühl...*, pp. 275-277.

180 A. Brose, *Charlemagne dans l'idéologie national-socialiste*, "Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire" / "Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis" 93 (2015), 3-4, pp. 811-842.

181 Ibidem, p. 817.

182 G. Althoff, *Sachsenherzog...*, pp. 251-252; cf. E. Freise, *Widukind...*, p. 20.

not radical. Neither the hagiographers of the 9th century, nor the authors of the Ottonian period, went so far as to negate Charlemagne's policies and the legitimacy of his wars of conquest. However, the emphasis on religious motives served to soften the traumatic impact of the memories, which in one form or another persisted for generations. In the hagiographic texts of the 9th century, a defensive approach prevailed. They were written in an intellectual atmosphere still permeated with accusations from the Frankish opinion-makers against the Saxon people's treachery. On the other hand, the 10th century historians were proud of their Saxon present and projected their pride onto the past.

The authors expressing and shaping Saxon historical consciousness, even those known in the elite circles throughout the kingdom and aiming for broader influence, wished to replace the narrative of the wars between the Saxons and Charlemagne with a tradition of their Christianization liberated from the antagonistic aspect. They were more inclined to think in terms of "Woe to the vanquished" rather than "Glory to the victors". On the other hand, reasoning in terms of "moral victory", known from many later manifestations, such as the Serbian tradition around the Battle of Kosovo in 1389, remained alien to them. Christianization, which was non-ironically considered one of Charlemagne's most worthy achievements, something for which gratitude should be expressed to him, was believed to have its continuation in the expansion of Christianity or the rule of Christian rulers further East - which actually meant the same thing. Thus, the Saxons, along with the Franks, became co-responsible for the historical task that appeared as a variant of the ancient Roman mission of civilizing barbarians.¹⁸³ Their participation in converting pagans proved that the Saxons themselves were fully Christianized. Consequently, they not only fully belonged to the camp of conquerors but also to the camp of civilizers; apart from their military successes, their claim to glory was expressed in this way. Subsequent eras invented and even ridiculed the concepts of historical justice and historical necessity, while the Saxon authors of the 9th, 10th, and early 11th centuries reasoned in terms of justice rooted in the sacred history in which the evangelization of all nations played a significant role.

¹⁸³ In the Saxon tradition of the later Middle Ages, there was one more civilizational dimension in the assessment of the work of Charlemagne in Saxony: he was credited with giving the Saxons rights, and a remnant of this distant tradition were the statues of Roland erected in northern German cities - cf. P. Johanek, *Die Sachsenkriege Karls des Großen und der Besuch Papst Leos III. in Paderborn 799 im Gedächtnis der Nachwelt*, "Westfälische Zeitschrift" 150 (2000), pp. 221-222. The authors of the texts discussed in the article, however, did not treat this topic as an important one - therefore it deserves only a mention in the footnote.

ABSTRACT

The decades-long wars of the Frankish king and the emperor Charlemagne with the Saxons ended with the conquest of these people and led to their forced Christianization. The Saxon elite largely adapted to the new conditions. The Saxon noble families strengthened their position and began to play an increasingly important role in the kingdom called the kingdom of the East Franks. They also cultivated a supra-local identity that was reflected in the hagiographic and historiographical texts.

One of the important and potentially sensitive themes discussed in these works became the wars of Charlemagne with the Saxons. Writing with the awareness of Charlemagne's complete victory, the authors did not question the rightness and sense of his actions. At the same time, they tried to relate the defeat of the Saxons and its consequences in the least painful way for Saxon pride.

In the relatively long period covered by the analysis in this article (mid-ninth century - early eleventh century), two phases can be distinguished. In the first, the dominant medium were hagiographic works belonging to the genre of *Translatio* (reports of translations of relics belonging to saints: Alexander, Vitus, Pusinna, and others) or *Vita* (of Liutbirg, Liudger). A poem about Charlemagne was also written in that period in Saxon circles. The authors, referring to the past of the Saxons, used defensive strategies. They still tried to refute the accusations of treachery and pagan hardness formulated from the Frankish side against the Saxons during the wars.

The second phase refers to texts written after one of the Saxon noble families - the Liudolfings - took power in the East Frankish kingdom. Historians and hagiographers attached to the Ottonian court demonstrated their Saxon pride in its entirety. The most representative example is that of Widukind of Corvey. As they described the events of Charles' time, they minimized the drastic details of these wars. They also turned Charles's struggle with the Saxons into wars of equal opponents. This was achieved by creating as a main character on Saxon side *dux* Widukind. It is present, for example, in the lives of Queen Matilda, who was considered to be descendant of *dux*.

Increasingly distant events were also interpreted through the prism of the later success of the Saxons. For the authors of this period, the Saxons became as a people, co-rulers, together with the Franks, of a kingdom, and then a renewed empire. They also became full-fledged participants in a kind of civilizational mission, which was associated with the conquest and Christianization of subsequent peoples, this time Slavic. These ideas found expression in the works of Bruno of Querfurt, a Saxon author for whom Charlemagne was a model ruler because of his commitment to evangelization.

Key words: Charlemagne, Widukind, Saxon wars, Saxons, hagiography, Queen Matilda

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JOHN OF SCHWENKENFELD: DOMINICAN INQUISITOR-MARTYR AND HIS CULT



INTRODUCTION

Until recently, John of Schwenkenfeld, Dominican friar and papal inquisitor has not attracted much historical interest. Mostly associated with the enquiry into the life and mores of a small community of beguines in Świdnica (Germ. Schweidnitz), he was the second papal inquisitor operating in the diocese of Wrocław (Germ. Breslau), taking *officium inquisitionis* after the death of his fellow friar Peregrinus of Opole, who had been appointed as the first Silesian inquisitor in 1318 by Pope John XXII. What was previously known about Schwenkenfeld originated mostly from early modern Dominican historiography, which offered only patchy and distorted details about his career and activities. Recently, however, new research on the 1332 records have brought Schwenkenfeld's life into focus, showing him as one of the best-trained and most influential friars in the Polish Dominican province in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. He was not only an active and respected member the Dominican Order, but also played an important role in the pastoral and disciplinary reforms promoted in Silesia by Bishop Nanker of Wrocław. Actually, it was his inquisitorial operations, commissioned by Nanker, that brought Schwenkenfeld into the heated conflict with Wrocław burgers that led to his assassination in 1341. The paper re-examines the life and activities of John of Schwenkenfeld in all their forms and manifestations.

The fourteenth-century sources regarding the Silesian Dominican are scarce and scattered. His biography can thus be only partially reconstructed using documents and chronicle accounts created either during Schwenkenfeld's lifetime or shortly after his death. The most valuable source materials include the records of his enquiry into the Świdnica beguines in September 1332, the original of which can be found in the Vatican Library (catalogue number MS Vat. Lat. 13119a). A fifteenth-century copy is preserved in the Archive of the Kraków Cathedral Chapter under catalogue number MS LA 37.¹ The interrogations of the beguines and witnesses took place in the refectory of the Dominican friary in Świdnica, with John of Schwenkenfeld acting as the papal inquisitor in the dioceses of Wrocław and Lubusz. The transcript of the depositions took the form of a notarial instrument penned by Nicholas of Panków, a public notary who worked closely with Bishop Nanker of Wrocław and the bishop's deputy judge, Apeczka of Zabkowice (Germ. Frankenstein). Schwenkenfeld had to consult and approve its form and content.² First of all, the 1332 records provide insight into the life and religious practices of the Świdnica community of "Hooded Sisters" (*moniales capuciate*), who belonged to the German-speaking network of "the Poor Beguines," established first in Cologne in the last decade of the fourteenth century by Odelindis of Pyrzyce (Germ. Piritz).³ This is a unique source, as it offers detailed insight into the piety of beguines during the period of persecution that followed the constitutions of the Council of Vienne (1311-1312).⁴ The interrogation records also shed light on the theological training and inquisitorial techniques of John of Schwenkenfeld.⁵

This article also analyses the cult of John of Schwenkenfeld that developed after his tragic death in 1341. It is known that Schwenkenfeld's body was brought from Prague to the Dominican church of St Wojciech in Wrocław, where it became an object of veneration. The Dominicans of Wrocław had no doubts that Schwenkenfeld had been assassinated because of his inquisitorial

1 P. Kras, T. Gałuszka, A. Poznański, *Proces beginek świdnickich w 1332 roku. Studia historyczne i edycja łacińsko-polska*, Lublin 2018, pp. 151-156; a modified English version of this study was published as T. Gałuszka, P. Kras, *The Beguines of Medieval Świdnica. The Interrogations of the "Daughters of Odelindis" in 1332*, Woodbridge-Rochester 2023 (= *Heresy and Inquisition in the Middle Ages* 11), pp. 151-156.

2 Ibidem, pp. 69, 83-86.

3 Ibidem, pp. 100-102.

4 See, for example: H. Grundmann, *Ketzergeschichte des Mittelalters*, Göttingen 1963, pp. 55-56; G. Leff, *Heresy in the Later Middle Ages: The Relation of Heterodoxy to Dissent c. 1250-1450*, vol. 2, Manchester-New York 1967, pp. 386-387; R.E. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit in the Later Middle Ages*, Berkeley-Los Angeles-London 1972, pp. 112-113; J. Voigt, *Beginen im Spätmittelalter. Frauen Frömmigkeit in Thüringen und im Reich Köln-Weimar-Wien* 2012, p. 315.

5 For new findings concerning Schwenkenfeld's theological education, see T. Gałuszka, P. Kras, *The Beguines of Medieval Świdnica*, pp. 57-69.

activities. The Prague papal inquisitor's investigation into the circumstances of the assassination strengthened this opinion. There is evidence too that, shortly after Schwenkenfeld's murder, Polish Dominicans exalted him as a holy inquisitor and martyr. Being aware of the widespread popularity of the cult of St Peter of Verona, the papal inquisitor in Lombardy who had been murdered by the Cathars in 1252 and canonized two years later, they sought to elevate Schwenkenfeld to the altars as a newly martyred Dominican inquisitor. These efforts, however, were unsuccessful, and the cult of the Silesian inquisitor turned out to be short-lived. Only at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and mainly thanks to the works of Abraham Bzovius (Bzowski) on the history of the Polish Dominican province, was the memory of Schwenkenfeld restored and his cult reanimated, at least among Polish friar-preachers. In early modern Dominican historiography and hagiography, John of Schwenkenfeld became the leading Polish papal inquisitor who, due to his uncompromising struggle against heresy, was brutally murdered by heretics. In this article, I attempt to reconstruct the mechanism by which the image of John of Schwenkenfeld as a holy inquisitor and martyr was constructed, popularised and passed down by means of various historiographical and hagiographical texts.

LIFE AND ECCLESIASTICAL CAREER

Little is known about Schwenkenfeld before he became papal inquisitor in the diocese of Wrocław. As Tomasz Jurek has shown, he belonged to a German knightly family that had settled in the village of Schwenkenfeld (*Schwenkefelt*, *Svenkenfelt*, *Svenkinfeld*) near Świdnica (today Makowice) in the mid-thirteenth century.⁶ He was probably born in the 1280s, and at the beginning of the fourteenth century took vows in the Dominican convent of Świdnica.⁷ The first source about Schwenkenfeld appears in a doc-

6 T. Jurek, *Obce rycerstwo na Śląsku do połowy XIV wieku*, Poznań 1996, pp. 104, 108, 143, 293-294; cf. A. Patschovsky, *Johannes von Schwenkenfeld*, in: *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. 10, Berlin 1974, p. 567; *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 10, p. 481; S. Kotelko, *W średniowieczu – od początków miasta do 1526 roku*, in: *Świdnica. Zarys monografii miasta*, ed. W. Korta, Wrocław-Świdnica 1995, p. 86; J. Szymański, *Joannes Swenkenfeldt – inquisitor et martyr*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka" 58 (2003), 1, pp. 3-4, footnote 17; idem, *Ruchy heretyckie na Śląsku w XIII i XIV wieku*, Chudów 2007, p. 120.

7 J. Kłoczowski, *Dominikanie polscy na Śląsku w XIII-XV wieku*, Lublin 1956, pp. 54, 306-307. According to the constitution *Nolentes splendorem* announced at the Council of Vienne (1311), taking up the position of the papal inquisitor Schwenkenfeld must have been at least forty years old, which allows us to assume that he was born in the late 1380s. *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. N.P. Tanner, vol. 1, London-Washington DC 1990, pp. 382-383; cf. P. Kras, *The System of the Inquisition in Medieval Europe*, Berlin-Bern-Bruxelles-New York-Oxford-Warszawa-Wien, 2020), pp. 187-188.

ument dated 23 November 1330, by Bishop Nanker of Wrocław. He appears in it as the papal inquisitor in the diocese of Wrocław, for whom Nanker assured cooperation from the diocesan clergy in the execution of the *officium inquisitionis*.⁸ Schwenkenfeld performed the duties of the papal inquisitor until his death in 1341. Sometime before September 1332, his inquisitorial jurisdiction also covered the diocese of Lubusz (Germ. Lebus), which is confirmed in the introduction to the above-mentioned interrogations of the beguines of Świdnica.⁹ In fact, Schwenkenfeld appears on the pages of history in 1330 immediately as a friar of high standing who held the offices of lector and papal inquisitor, both requiring theological competences and experience.

It is not known when precisely Schwenkenfeld was appointed to the *officium inquisitionis* in the Wrocław diocese. The *terminus ad quem* is the date of the above-mentioned document by Bishop Nanker, i.e. 23 November 1330.¹⁰ The *terminus a quo* is marked by the resignation from this office of the first Silesian inquisitor, Peregrinus of Opole in 1327.¹¹ Schwenkenfeld's appointment as Wrocław inquisitor was carried out by the provincial minister of the Polish Dominicans, Peter of Chełmno (1327-1331), to whom

8 Archiwum Państwowe we Wrocławiu (The State Archives in Wrocław), Akta miasta Wrocławia (Wrocław City Records), Dominikanie (Dominicans) no. 64; Rep. 57, no. 64; a short note on this document in *Regesten zur schlesischen Geschichte (1327-1333)*, Codex diplomaticus Silesiae 22, ed. C. Grünhagen, K. Wutke, Breslau 1903, no. 4982, p. 108.

9 In the interrogations of the beguines of Świdnica, Schwenkenfeld is described as the inquisitor in the diocese of Wrocław and Lubusz. T. Gałuszka, P. Kras, *The Beguines of Medieval Świdnica...*, pp. 168-171. Extending his inquisitorial tasks to the diocese of Lubusz points to the existence of close ties between the diocesan clergy of Wrocław and Lubusz. Many Wrocław canons belonged also to the Lubusz chapter. Apeczka from Ząbkowice Śląskie, a close associate of both bishop Nanker and Schwenkenfeld, combined his functions of a Wrocław deputy judge (*officialis*) and canon with participating in the Lubusz Chapter; in 1345 he became the Bishop of Lubusz. J. Lewański, *Biskup Apeczko – uczony wrocławianin i obrońca polskiej racji stanu w wieku XIV*, "Zaranie Śląskie" 22 (1959), 2, pp. 3-17; J. Kopiec, *Apetzko (Apeczko) Deyn von Frankenstein* († 1352), in: *Die Bischöfe des Heiligen Römischen Reiches 1198-1448*, ed. E. Gatz, Berlin 1996, p. 342.

10 This date of the appointment to the office of the inquisitor was given by A. Patschovsky, *Johannes von Schwenkenfeld...*, p. 567.

11 The resignation of Peregryn from Opole from the inquisitorial office and the appointment of Schwenkenfeld in 1327 was first mentioned by Wawrzyniec Teleżyński (*De rebus Provinciae Poloniae S. Hyacinthi Ordinis Praedicatorum*, Biblioteka Kórnicka Ms 93, book 7); cf. V.J. Koudelka, *Zur Geschichte der böhmischen Dominikanerprovinz im Mittelalter*, "Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum" 25 (1955), p. 92; Z. Mazur, *Powstanie i działalność inkwizycji dominikańskiej na Śląsku w XIV wieku*, "Nasza Przyszłość" 39 (1973), p. 183; P. Kras, *Dominican Inquisitors in Mediaeval Poland*, in: *Praedicatores, Inquisitores*, vol. 1: *The Dominicans and the Mediaeval Inquisition. Acts of the 1st International Seminar on the Dominicans and the Inquisition. Rome, 23-25 February 2002*, ed. A. Palacios Bernal, Roma 2004, p. 260.

Pope John XXII, in a bull of 1 April 1327, delegated the power to appoint new inquisitors in the metropolitan province of Gniezno.¹² It is possible that granting these powers to the minister provincial was directly related to the resignation of Peregrinus, the first papal inquisitor in Silesia, and the election of his successor. It seems that Schwenkenfeld's nomination to the office of papal inquisitor took place rather shortly before Nanker's document of November 1330. In any event, the Dominican inquisitor could not effectively fulfil inquisitorial tasks without the approval of the Wrocław bishop. The constitution *Multorum querela*, adopted at the Council of Vienne in 1311 and promulgated in 1317, enforced the close cooperation between papal inquisitors and bishops. Papal inquisitors were even placed under the supervision of bishops, whom they were supposed to inform about their activities and from whom they obtained approval of the sentences imposed.¹³

Appointment to the position of the papal inquisitor testifies to the experience and high competence of Schwenkenfeld, who also enjoyed the full confidence of his superiors in the Dominican Order. Appropriate theological and pastoral competences were necessary for serving as a papal inquisitor. It is worth mentioning that in the bulls of 1 May 1318, John XXII emphasized the high theological qualifications and pastoral experience of the first inquisitors appointed for Bohemia and Poland.¹⁴ Schwenkenfeld must have had the competences similar to the first papal inquisitors for Polish lands: his fellow friar Peregrinus of Opole and Franciscan Nicholas Hospodyniec. Research on the entire group of Dominican inquisitors operating in the metropolitan province of Gniezno shows that they were recruited from among friars who had a theological education and had performed significant functions in the Order. Most of them completed university studies with bachelor's or doctorate degrees in theology. Before taking up the position of inquisitor, many held the positions of provincials, definitors, priors, and lectors, thus belonging to the elite of the Polish Dominican province.¹⁵

The education and monastic career of John of Schwenkenfeld confirm the above findings. Before taking up the function of inquisitor, he served as a lector in the Dominican monastery in Świdnica, which required

12 *Bullarium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, vol. 2, Romae 1729, p. 175; cf. P. Kras, *Inkwizycja papieska w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej: powstanie i organizacja*, in: *Inkwizycja papieska w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej*, ed. P. Kras, Kraków 2010 (= *Studia i Źródła Dominikańskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Krakowie* 7), pp. 131-139.

13 *Decrees*, vol. 1, pp. 380-382; cf. P. Kras, *The System of the Inquisition...*, pp. 186-189.

14 *Bullarium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum...*, vol. 2, pp. 138-141; A. Patschovsky, *Die Anfänge einer ständigen Inquisition in Böhmen. Ein Prager Inquisitoren-Handbuch aus der ersten Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts*. Beiträge zur Geschichte und Quellenkunde des Mittelalters, vol. 3, Berlin-New York 1975), no. 109, pp. 191-193; P. Kras, *Inkwizycja papieska...*, pp. 128-131.

15 P. Kras, *Dominican Inquisitors...*, pp. 281-285.

a theological education. He is mentioned for the first time as a lector in Świdnica in a document from 1331.¹⁶ In another document from 1339, Schwenkenfeld appears as *magister in sacra pagina*, but it is not known whether this refers to a university degree or his position as lector (theology teacher).¹⁷ The *Chronicle of Polish Princes* (*Chronica ducum Polonorum*), written in the 1380s, defines Schwenkenfeld in the same way.¹⁸ In an undated inscription, created probably before the end of the fourteenth century in the Dominican church in Świdnica, Schwenkenfeld was described as *magister theologiae*.¹⁹ According to Tomasz Gałuszka OP, in the 1320s and 1330s, in the Polish Dominican province, there was no friar with such a comprehensive theological education as John of Schwenkenfeld.²⁰ Unfortunately, it is not known where he completed his studies.²¹ It is possible that he studied at the Dominican *studium generale* in Kraków, which began operations at the beginning of the fourteenth century.²² It is also quite probable that, due to Schwenkenfeld's excellent knowledge in disputes

16 *Regesten zur schlesischen Geschichte...*, no. 4996, pp. 112-113; cf. J.B. Korolec, *Lista lektorów dominikańskich prowincji polskiej w XIII-XIV wieku*, "Materiały i Studia Zakładu Filozofii Starożytnej i Średniowiecznej" 2 (1962), p. 213. W. Bucichowski, *Lista lektorów dominikańskich w polskiej prowincji dominikańskiej (od jej powstania do 1525)*, "Przegląd Tomistyczny" 6-7 (1997), no. 45, p. 135; P. Kras, *Dominican Inquisitors*, Annex, no. 15, p. 301.

17 *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 10, p. 481. In the fourteenth-century sources, this form could refer to a person who completed biblical studies with a bachelor's degree.

18 *Cronica principum Poloniae*. Monumenta Poloniae Historica, vol. 3, ed. Z. Węclewski, Cracoviae 1878, p. 523. The author of the contemporary Polish translation of the *Chronicle* inaccurately described Schwenkenfeld as "master of biblical studies". *Kronika ksiąząt polskich*, transl. J. Wojtczak-Szyszkowski, Opole 2019, p. 137.

19 The inscription was copied into a seventeenth-century manuscript with the so-called *Excerpta ex Chronico Swidnicensi* (the University Library in Wrocław, Ms R 622). It is also copied in S. J. Ehrhardt's work *Abhandlung vom verderbten Religions-Zustand in Schlesien vor der Evangelischen Kirchen-Reformation als eine Einleitung zur Schlesischen Presbyterologie*, Breslau 1778, pp. 166-167.

20 P. Kras, T. Gałuszka, *The Beguines of Świdnica...*, pp. 104-144.

21 K. Kaczmarek, *Szkoły i studia polskich dominikanów w okresie średniowiecza*, Poznań 2005, pp. 139, 149, 412-413, and n. 63.

22 The authors of the article on Schwenkenfeld in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* argued that "he could have earned his scholarly degrees abroad or in Kraków" (*Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 10, p. 481). In contrast to the opinions of scholars who date the founding of the Dominican *studium generale* in Kraków at the beginning of the fifteenth century (K. Kaczmarek, M. Zdanek, and others), T. Gałuszka has recently suggested that the *studium* could have been created soon after 1304, as a consequence of the changes in the Dominican constitutions introduced at that time, in the chapter *De studentibus*. T. Gałuszka, *Studium generalne dominikanów polskich w XIV wieku*, "Folia historica Cracoviensia" 20 (2014), pp. 35-63. The early establishment of the *studium generale* in Kraków would make probable Schwenkenfeld's theological studies there. It remains unclear whether Schwenkenfeld knew Bishop Nanker of Kraków with whom he closely cooperated in the diocese of Wrocław after 1330.

regarding the doctrine of Meister Eckhart, he studied at the Dominican *studium generale* either in Cologne or in Paris.²³

At least from 1330, John of Schwenkenfeld cooperated closely with Bishop Nanker of Wrocław and enjoyed his trust. He probably played a more important role in Nanker's reformatory and pastoral activities than available sources indicate.²⁴ It can be assumed that his appointment to the office of papal inquisitor in the Wrocław diocese was consulted with Nanker, who had been transferred to Wrocław from Kraków in 1326. In the 1330s, the bishop of Wrocław eagerly used Schwenkenfeld's competences, and the area of cooperation between these two men went beyond matters related to the fight against heresy.²⁵ In cooperation with the bishop of Wrocław, the Dominican inquisitor conducted interrogations in September 1332 in the community of "Hooded Sisters" of Świdnica, and probably took similar steps towards other groups of unlicensed beguines in Silesia.

A year earlier, John of Schwenkenfeld represented Nanker in the trial of priest Andreas of Brunswick (13 January 1331), who had been captured in Świdnica in the company of some "suspicious women" and sent to the city prison. In addition to Schwenkenfeld, Andrew's interrogation in the Świdnica city hall was attended by the closest associates of Bishop Nanker: Herman of Beczów, dean of the Wrocław Collegiate Church of the Holy Cross and Master Franczko, a jurist from Wrocław, as well as two priests from the Świdnica parish church, Henry, the prior of the Świdnica Dominicans, the guardian of the Świdnica Franciscans, and two Świdnica councillors: Johann Gerlaci and Johann Hulferici. On the witness list, Schwenkenfeld, identified as a lector of the Świdnica Dominicans, ranks higher than the prior of his own friary and the guardian of the Franciscan convent.²⁶ This was probably due to his function as a papal inquisitor which, though not mentioned in the register, gave him priority over the prior of the Dominican friary.

23 Summing up the research on Schwenkenfeld's studies, Krzysztof Kaczmarek states that, "brother John must have studied theology for many years, but neither the time, nor the place of his studies can be determined today." He adds that "some sources title him the master of theology - if they are to be trusted, we need to assume that John looked for education outside of his province." Kaczmarek dismisses R. Świętochowski's assumption that brother Jan could get his education in the Dominican *studium generale* in Kraków. The possibility of Schwenkenfeld's studies in Cologne, where Meister Eckhart worked in the 1320s, has recently been suggested by R.E. Lerner, *Preface*, in: T. Gałuszka, P. Kras, *The Beguines of Świdnica...*, pp. xiii-xiv.

24 *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 22, pp. 514-517; T. Silnicki, *Dzieje i ustrój Kościoła na Śląsku*, in: *Historia Śląska od najdawniejszych czasów do roku 1400*, vol. 2, part 1, Kraków 1939, pp. 215-222; idem, *Biskup Nanker*, Warszawa 1953, pp. 95-98; J. Swastek, *Biskup Nanker jako ordynariusz diecezji wrocławskiej*, in: *Ludzie śląskiego Kościoła katolickiego*, ed. K. Matwijowski, Wrocław 1992, pp. 70-74.

25 A. Patschovsky, *Johannes von Schwenkenfeld...*, p. 567.

26 *Regesten zur schlesischen Geschichte*, no. 4996, pp. 112-113.

By conducting proceedings against a group of Świdnica beguines who called themselves "Hooded Sisters", Schwenkenfeld implemented the provisions of the Council of Vienne expressed in the constitutions *Cum de quibusdam mulieribus* and *Ad nostrum*. This first constitution prohibited unlicensed groups of beguines and begards from conducting any activities.²⁷ The *Ad nostrum* constitution made beguines, along with begards, responsible for spreading the errors of the Free Spirit heresy. In eight articles, it listed the most important elements of this heretical doctrine, whose supporters believed that a person could, on his own and without church ministry, achieve spiritual perfection, i.e. the mystical union of the soul liberated from the body with God. According to the *Ad nostrum*, the adherents of the Free Spirit heresy believed that everyone who had achieved this state was not subject to any church laws or moral norms; and they did not need the sacraments.²⁸ Both constitutions, published together with the entire council codification in November 1317 by John XXII, became the instruments of persecution of beguines and begards, whose communities were suppressed or transformed into tertiary groups supervised by Franciscans or Dominicans.

In the Wrocław diocese, Nanker's predecessor, Henry of Wierzbno, was responsible for implementing the conciliar constitutions concerning beguines. The documents produced by his close collaborator, Arnold of Protzan, a Wrocław canon and notary, included Bishop Henry's regulations, modelled on *Cum de quibusdam*, ordering the suppression of communities of beguines in the Wrocław diocese.²⁹ The sudden death of Henry of Wierzbno in 1319 suspended the implementation of these resolutions. Only Nanker's assumption of episcopal power after a seven-year vacancy allowed for the resumption of inquisitorial operations against the Silesian beguines.³⁰ The records of the trial conducted by John of Schwenkenfeld against the Świdnica beguines are a key source for these activities. As they reveal, the purpose of the papal inquisitor was to learn about the life and mores of the Świdnica beguines, who called themselves *Capuciatae*. When conducting the interrogations, Schwenkenfeld had in front of him the constitutions *Cum de quibusdam* and *Ad nostrum*, and a number of his questions directly referred to the statements contained therein, which the notary, Nicholas of Panków, noted in the preserved documentation. Schwenkenfeld had no

27 *Decrees*, vol. 1, p. 374.

28 *Ibidem*, pp. 383-384.

29 *Das Formelbuch des Domherrn Arnold von Protzan*, Codex diplomaticus Silesiae 5, ed. W. Wattenbach, Breslau 1862, no. 76-77, pp. 59-62.

30 T. Silnicki, *Dzieje*, pp. 223-225; *idem*, *Biskup Nanker*, pp. 53-57; K. Ożóg, *Kultura umysłowa w Krakowie w XIV wieku. Środowisko duchowieństwa świeckiego*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź, 1987, p. 9.

doubt that the activities of the Świdnica beguines violated the constitution *Cum de quibusdam*, because the "Hooded Sisters" formed a quasi-cloistered congregation that did not have the approval of church authorities. During the interrogations, he skilfully formulated questions, obtaining information from the interrogated women to confirm his suspicions.³¹

Above all, Schwenkenfeld was interested in the controversial religious views of the Świdnica sisters. As an experienced theologian, he was able to identify intriguing theological issues in their testimonies, which he tried to understand better. The Silesian inquisitor not only used the constitution *Ad nostrum* during interrogations, which collated the views of the so-called sect of the Free Spirit, but he also knew the bull of John XXII, *In agro dominico* of 27 March 1329, which condemned 28 statements attributed to Meister Eckhart.³² The depositions of the simple and illiterate beguines from Świdnica not only contain a number of references to the mystical theology of Meister Eckhart, but also use appropriate terminology. As the preserved trial documentation proves, Schwenkenfeld's theological passion prevailed over the requirements of the inquisitorial bureaucracy. For this reason, the detailed and colourful records of the testimonies from 1332 differ from the schematic formulas typical of most inquisitorial protocols.³³

Schwenkenfeld's close cooperation with Bishop Nanker is also evidenced by the role he played in founding a new Dominican monastery in Brzeg (Germ. Brieg). Probably at the provincial chapter in the autumn of 1334, he was appointed by his superiors to supervise the foundation of this convent. As Tomasz Gałuszka noted, "the choice of John was fully justified", because "he had the appropriate skills, contacts and authority, which undoubtedly facilitated both the complicated foundation process and talks with the local clergy."³⁴ On behalf of seniors of the Polish province, Schwenkenfeld, together with the Wrocław lector Jan Sutorka, sought support from the Duke of Brzeg-Legnica, Bolko III, for the new Dominican convent. He can also be seen as the notary of the princely foundation charter for the Brzeg friary, issued on 9 January 1336. Schwenkenfeld also obtained the support of Bishop Nanker, presenting for his approval documents regarding the Brzeg friary on 29 July 1336.³⁵ In 1337, Schwenkenfeld became the prior of the Świdnica convent, which in terms of importance

31 R.E. Lerner, *The Heresy of the Free Spirit...*, pp. 112-119; J. Szymański, *Ruchy heretyckie...*, pp. 77-118; P. Kras, T. Gałuszka, *The Beguines of Świdnica...*, pp. 65-69.

32 P. Kras, T. Gałuszka, *The Beguines of Świdnica...*, pp. 108-111.

33 P. Kras, *The System of the Inquisition...*, pp. 283-311.

34 T. Gałuszka, K. Kaczmarek, *Fratres apud Sanctam Crucem. Z badań nad dziejami dominikanów w Brzegu*, Poznań 2018, p. 53.

35 Ibidem, pp. 28-30.

was second only to the Wrocław friary in Silesia. In 1338, the provincial chapter gave him the power to prosecute and imprison (*potestas libera incarcerandi*) brothers suspected of heresy.³⁶

ASSASSINATION

In 1339, at Bishop Nanker's request, John of Schwenkenfeld took inquisitorial actions against the Wrocław councillors who violated interdict. Nanker's conflict with the councillors was part of a wider controversy between the Wrocław bishop and the Czech king John of Luxembourg.³⁷ In a dispute over the bishop's estate of Milicz, which had been illegally seized by John of Luxembourg, the Wrocław city council sided with the Czech ruler, bringing excommunication upon itself and an interdict on the city. Ignoring ecclesiastical sanctions, the starost of Wrocław, Kunad of Falkenhain, and seven Wrocław councillors removed priests observing the interdict from the parish churches of St Elizabeth, St Mary Magdalene, and the church of Holy Spirit, staffing them with their appointees termed "the vagabonds" in the source materials. The conflict intensified in January 1341, when the church of St Mary Magdalene was handed over to the Cistercian apostate Nicholas of Krzeszów, who was suspected of preaching the radical doctrine of Peter John Olivi.³⁸ It was then that John of Schwenkenfeld joined Nanker's action against the priests who illegally occupied Wrocław churches and the Wrocław councillors who supported them. He conducted his inquisitorial operations in cooperation with Apeczka of Ząbkowice, the deputy judge of the Wrocław bishop.³⁹ These actions resulted in the imprisonment of Nicholas and the introduction of a new parish priest to the church of St Mary Magdalene.

The main targets of the inquisitorial action were the councillors of Wrocław, who, by breaking the excommunication and interdict, brought upon themselves suspicion of heresy. At the end of 1340, John of Schwenkenfeld arrived in Wrocław, where he delivered a sermon in front of the city hall calling for

³⁶ T. Gałuszka, *Mikołaj z Duthurowa OP Error condemnatus ab Ecclesia. Dominikanie polscy wobec herezji i nowych nurtów pobożności w 1. połowie XIV wieku*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny" 121 (2014), 1, pp. 91-92.

³⁷ An extensive report on this conflict can be found in *Cronica principum Poloniae*, pp. 520-524.

³⁸ J. Heyne, *Dokumentierte Geschichte des Bistums und Hochstiftes Breslau*, vol. 1, Breslau 1860, pp. 732-750; C. Grünhagen, *König Johann von Böhmen und Bischof Nanker von Breslau*, Wien 1864, pp. 93-95; T. Silnicki, *Dzieje*, pp. 225-235; idem, *Biskup Nanker*, pp. 99-108; J. Kłoczowski, *Dominikanie polscy*, pp. 156-157; E. Schieche, *Politische Geschichte von 1327-1526*, in: *Geschichte Schlesiens*, vol. 1, ed. L. Petry, J.J. Menzel, W. Irgang, Stuttgart 1988, p. 166. A comprehensive analysis of the conflict has recently been done by J. Szymański, *Ruchy heretyckie...*, pp. 122-129; idem, *Joannes Swenkenfeldt...*, pp. 5-14.

³⁹ *Das Formelbuch des Domherrn Arnold von Protzan...*, no. 92, pp. 294-295.

obedience to ecclesiastical authorities, and then summoned the councillors to appear before his court for interrogation.⁴⁰ This action started an initial procedure of inquisitorial investigation *in causa fidei*, during which any individuals accused of violation of canon law were offered a chance to prove their innocence (*purgatio canonica*).⁴¹ When the councillors failed to appear, Schwenkenfeld announced their persistence (*contumacia*) and imposed excommunication on them. His actions provoked a hostile reaction from the townspeople of Wrocław, who forced him to leave the city.⁴² Undeterred by the problems, the Dominican inquisitor continued his operations against the Wrocław councillors, which were not interrupted even by the death of Bishop Nanker on 8 April 1341. On 27 August 1341, together with Apeczka, the administrator of the diocese, Schwenkenfeld anathematized the councillors of Wrocław, which, according to canon law, should have resulted in their losing offices and property.⁴³ Thus the conflict entered a new phase involving King John of Luxembourg. Determined to find a solution, the Czech king decided to act as an intermediary. He summoned Schwenkenfeld, the starost of Wrocław, and representatives of the city council to Prague, where he planned to hear the arguments of both parties. For the duration of the journey and stay in Prague, the king issued safe passage to the inquisitor. Nevertheless, shortly after arriving in Prague, Schwenkenfeld was murdered by assassins hired by the Wrocław councillors.

The best source to analyze the murder of the Silesian inquisitor is a document dated 10 October 1341 from Prague papal inquisitor Havel of Jindřichův Hradec, who announced an investigation into Schwenkenfeld's assassination. The document briefly described the circumstances of the assault: John of Schwenkenfeld, referred to as the "inquisitor of Poland," arrived in Prague on 4 October, the feast of St Francis, and stayed at the Dominican friary of St Clement, located opposite the bridge over the Vltava River. On Saturday, 6 October, he celebrated matins, during which he delivered a "wonderful and useful sermon."⁴⁴ After the mass, the Silesian Dominican went to the chapel of St Bartholomew, in the friary garden, to prepare for an audience with the Czech king.⁴⁵ There, when he was writing notes at the altar on "a matter

40 *Cronica principum Poloniae*, pp. 523-524.

41 P. Kras, *The System of the Inquisition...*, pp. 203-212.

42 *Cronica principum Poloniae*, p. 524.

43 *Regesten zur schlesischen Geschichte...*, no. 6659, p. 185; J. Szymański, *Joannes Swenkenfeldt...*, pp. 13-14; idem, *Ruchy heretyckie...*, pp. 129-130.

44 In the eighteenth-century historiography, the date of Schwenkenfeld's death was mistakenly given as the eve of the Feast of St Michael (28 September) instead of the octave of the feast (6 October). J. Szymański, *Ruchy heretyckie...*, pp. 130-131, footnote 73.

45 The chapel of St Bartholomew, which could also be entered by laymen, was situated close to the refectory, and opened into the friary garden. W.W. Tomek, *Dějepis města Prahy*, vol. 2, Praha 1879, p. 189.

of faith" (*causa fidei*), he was suddenly attacked by three assassins, described as "sons of perdition," "descendants of Satan," and "disciples of all wickedness," who stabbed him ten times with daggers. Leaving him half-dead, the killers hurried out of the chapel - as noticed by Havel - "knowing he couldn't survive." During the assault, other Dominicans from the friary of St Clement were singing mass in the church choir. Having described the circumstances of the murder, Havel summoned the assassins to appear before his court before the octave of St Martin (18 November).⁴⁶ In a later document, composed between 18 November and 25 December 1341, Havel imposed excommunication on Schwenkenfeld's murderers and all who helped them.⁴⁷ The assassins were caught in the spring of 1342 in Legnica. During interrogations conducted by the Bishop of Wrocław, Przecław of Pogorzela, it turned out that they had been hired and paid by three Wrocław councillors.⁴⁸

The most extensive account of Schwenkenfeld's death is offered in the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes* (*Chronica ducum Polonorum*), written from 1382-1398, probably by Peter of Byczyna, the canon of the collegiate church in Brzeg (Germ. Brieg).⁴⁹ In a separate chapter, the *Chronicle* presents in detail the conflict between Wrocław bishop Nanker and the Wrocław councillors in 1339-1341. The chronicler was well-informed, and his knowledge was based on both written sources and witness accounts. He took some information about Schwenkenfeld from an unknown text describing the conflict between Bishop Nanker, King John of Luxembourg, and the Wrocław councillors. Other facts concerning Schwenkenfeld's death and his posthumous cult the chronicler obtained from the Dominicans in Wrocław, in whose church the remains of the murdered inquisitor were buried. When describing the attack on Schwenkenfeld, the *Chronicle* refers to the accounts of many witnesses (*sicut audiui relatibus nonnullorum*).⁵⁰ One of them was "an unnamed senior Dominican" from the Wrocław friary who claimed that he "lived at that time and had first-hand knowledge about this event" (*intellexi a quodam antiquo fratre dicti monasterii, qui nunc asseruit se vixisse sibiue factum bene constare*).⁵¹ Another Dominican (*quidam alius frater*),

46 A. Patschovsky, *Die Anfänge...*, no. 64, pp. 161-163.

47 Ibidem, no. 142, pp. 215-217.

48 *Cronica principum Poloniae*, p. 526; cf. A. Patschovsky, *Anfänge...*, pp. 63-64; por. J. Szymański, *Joannes Swenkenfeldt...*, pp. 15-17; idem, *Ruchy heretyckie...*, pp. 130-132.

49 R. Heck, *Kronika książąt polskich – metoda prezentacji dziejów*, in: *Dawna historiografia Śląska*, ed. K. Gajda, Opole 1980, pp. 61-81; idem, *Chronica principum Poloniae a Chronica Polonorum*, "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka" 2 (1976), pp. 185-196; E. Skibiński, *Kronika książąt polskich*, in: *Vademecum historyka mediewisty*, ed. J. Nikodem, D.A. Sikorski, Warszawa 2012, pp. 270-274.

50 *Cronica principum Poloniae*, p. 525.

51 Ibidem, p. 526.

who cared for the grave of John of Schwenkenfeld, told the chronicler about Schwenkenfeld's cult and the miraculous vision in which the deceased inquisitor appeared to him.⁵²

The description of Schwenkenfeld's murder in the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes* reflects the tradition cultivated in the Dominican convent in Wrocław and differs in detail from the account given by the Czech inquisitor, Havel of Jindřichův Hradec. The Silesian chronicler wrote about two assassins, but, unlike Havel, he knew the identity of one of them (Knewfel). As the author of the *Chronicle* argues, the assassins went to Schwenkenfeld's cell in the Prague friary and knocked persistently on the door under the pretext of making a confession. When the Silesian inquisitor left his cell to hear their confessions, he was stabbed three times. From an older monk from the Wrocław convent, the author of the *Chronicle* learned that the dying inquisitor shouted after the assassins "bandits, bandits" (*latrones, latrones*), and later accepted the "palm of martyrdom" with humility. The Silesian chronicler also provided information about the wall near which Schwenkenfeld was attacked, where there were supposed to be still fresh traces of his blood. The Wrocław Dominicans, from whom the Silesian chronicler obtained information about Schwenkenfeld's death, did not know the details of the investigation conducted in Prague by inquisitor Havel. Their knowledge was probably based on the testimony given by the murderers, who were interrogated in spring of 1342 by Bishop Przeclaw of Pogorzela. From this source, they learned the names of one of the assassins, as well as their principals from the circle of Wrocław councillors. They also knew about the payment, estimated at 30 pieces of silver, that the assassins received for the murder of the Silesian inquisitor.⁵³ The incorrect location of the attack site (confusing the chapel of St Bartholomew in the friary garden with the gate) probably resulted from the report of the attackers, who did not know the topography of the Prague convent, as well as Havel of Jindřichův Hradec, who lived there. The dramatic story about Schwenkenfeld's death and the words he spoke during his agony became an element of the hagiographic legend about the inquisitor-martyr. The same applies to the fresh traces of Schwenkenfeld's blood miraculously preserved on the wall of the Prague friary. Incidentally, the *Chronicle* does not mention the bloody cope of the Silesian inquisitor, which, as Abraham Bzovius wrote at the beginning of the seventeenth century, was kept in the Dominican friary of Wrocław.⁵⁴

⁵² Ibidem.

⁵³ Ibidem.

⁵⁴ A. Bzovius, *Tutelariorum Silesiae seu de vita rebus(que) praeclare gestos b(eati) Ceslari Odrovansii Ordinis Praedicatorum commentaries*, Cracoviae 1608, p. 28.

POST-MORTEM CULT

The *Chronicle of Polish Dukes* is also the most valuable source confirming the development of the cult of John of Schwenkenfeld around his grave in the Dominican church of St Wojciech (Adalbert) in Wrocław. The Silesian inquisitor is presented there as a man of God (*vir Dei*), a martyr (*martyr*), and a holy man (*homo sanctae vitae*). He is also described as a persistent, brave man, devoted to God and diligently performing the office of inquisitor (*homo constans et strenuus, habens zelum Dei atque cupiens suum officium exequi diligenter*). We learn from the *Chronicle* that, shortly after Schwenkenfeld's murder, his body was brought from Prague to Wrocław and buried in one of the chapels of the Dominican church. As the Silesian chronicler writes, in 1342, Wrocław councillors went to Schwenkenfeld's grave in a penitential procession, which was an act of public atonement for the murder of the Dominican inquisitor, and at the same time became a condition for reconciliation with Bishop Przecław of Pogorzela. Services and prayer vigils were held in the chapel where Schwenkenfeld's remains were buried. An epitaph dedicated to the Silesian inquisitor and his portrait (*effigies*) were also placed here. The expectation of Schwenkenfeld's imminent canonization is evidenced by the vision of a Dominican friar, the chapel custodian, as described in the *Chronicle*. When Schwenkenfeld appeared to him, the friar asked why God did not perform miracles through his intercession. Schwenkenfeld's answer was that "they (miracles) will take place at the right time and will make this place and this friary where (his body) rests famous."⁵⁵ Under the influence of this vision, the custodian became convinced that John of Schwenkenfeld was a saint and his elevation to the altars was only a matter of time. He thus commissioned a wooden catafalque to be made over Schwenkenfeld's burial place, not wanting his remains to be trampled by chapel visitors.⁵⁶

The *Chronicle of Polish Dukes* does not mention any miracles occurring at Schwenkenfeld's grave. The lack of miracles is somehow compensated by the story about the plague that struck Wrocław in 1342. The account of the plague supposedly came from Emperor Charles IV, who told it to the Cyprian king Peter of Lusignan, probably when both rulers stayed in Wrocław

55 "Retulit mihi pretera quidam frater, habens curam capelle, in qua corporaliter requiescit et depictum est eius epitaphium in quadam imagine ad parietatem et ex adverso sepulchri, quod quadam vice sibi apparuerit dictus martir in silencio visionis nocturne. Qui, cum frater ille requireret, quid de statu foret? Respondit: optime. Requisitus per eum ulterius: cur deus eius meritis miracula non faceret? Ipse respondit: nondum est tempus, sed veniunt dies, quibus locus et monasterium hoc, in quo quiesco, multum exaltabitur". *Cronica principum Poloniae*, pp. 525-526.

56 Ibidem, 526.

in September 1364.⁵⁷ The cataclysm was described as a punishment for the murder of a “holy man” and the exile of the clergy from Wrocław. The great fire of Wrocław, which devastated the entire city in the same year, is also treated as a punishment for the crime committed against the Silesian inquisitor. As the chronicler writes, during the fire, a certain nun saw an angel, hovering over the church of St Maurice, who shook his sword at the city and threw hot coals onto it.⁵⁸

Before the end of the fourteenth century, an anonymous text was written entitled History of the assassination of John of Schwenkenfeld (*Historia interficionis Iohannis de Swenkenfelt*). Attached to a notarial instrument with the records of the 1332 interrogations,⁵⁹ the text described Schwenkenfeld's death on five pages of paper sewn to a parchment scroll with the testimonies.⁶⁰ Contrary to the title, it was not an original text describing the death of the Silesian inquisitor, but rather a loose compilation of four fragments from the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes*. The author's only contribution to this compilation is the title and the date of Schwenkenfeld's death at the end of the text. Both pieces of information were written in a different hand. Interestingly, the author of the added fragments gave the correct date of death for the Silesian inquisitor, which is not included in the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes*.⁶¹

The inclusion of the text of *Historia interficionis Iohannis de Swenkenfelt* in the documentation of the 1332 interrogations may testify to the efforts to canonize Schwenkenfeld at the end of the fourteenth century. At the moment, it is impossible to explain satisfactorily why only the records with the testimonies regarding the Świdnica beguines were sent to the Papal Curia, and there were no other documents related to Schwenkenfeld's inquisitorial activities, for example those regarding the proceedings in the case of the Wrocław councillors. It is impossible to understand why Schwenkenfeld's *vita* was not used in the canonization efforts, but rather a compilation of fragments

57 M. Holá, *Pobyty Karla IV. A jeho dvora ve Vratislavi v letech 1348–1372*, in: *Dvory a rezidence ve středověku*, Praha 2006, pp. 177–178.

58 *Cronica principum Poloniae*, p. 526; a similar account in Jan Długosz, *Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae, liber novus: 1300–1370*, ed. Z. Kozłowska-Budkowa et al., Warszawa 1978, p. 225.

59 Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms Vat. Lat. 13119b; available online: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.13119 [accessed 9.11.2021].

60 J. Szymański, *Johannes Swenkenfeldt...*, p. 5: “We do not know the final verdict reached at the end of the proceedings, but it is known that the inquisitor sent the original documents from the trial to the pope in Avinion”; por. P. Kielar, *Traktat przeciw beghardom Henryka Haavrera*, “Studia Theologica Varsoviensia” 8 (1970), p. 231, footnote 1; B. Lapis, D. Lapis, *Beginki w Polsce w XIII–XV wieku*, “Kwartalnik Historyczny” 79 (1972), p. 534, footnote 129.

61 Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, rkps Vat. Lat. 13119b, f. 5v: “Anno domini MCCCCXLI in octava sancti Michaelis, que tunc errat in sabbato, occisus est beate memorie frater Johannes de Swenkenfelt inquisitor”.

of the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes* was. There are no indications of the existence of a hagiographic text describing the life and death of the Silesian inquisitor. The lack of such a *vita* allows us to assume that, despite attempts to develop Schwenkenfeld's cult in the first years after his death, no formal efforts were ever made to canonize him, and in the fifteenth century the memory of the Silesian inquisitor-martyr became blurred.

The *Chronicle of Polish Dukes* proves that the Dominican friary in Wrocław was the main centre of the developing cult of John of Schwenkenfeld. The second place of memory of Schwenkenfeld was the Dominican friary in Świdnica, the mother convent of the murdered inquisitor. John, who came from the village of Schwenkenfeld near Świdnica, was ordained a friar there; later he served there as a conventual lector and a prior. For this reason, Schwenkenfeld was honoured with a stone epitaph in the Dominican church of the Holy Cross, where he was called "saint" (*beatus*).⁶²

In addition to the Silesian Dominicans in Wrocław and Świdnica, the memory of Schwenkenfeld developed in Prague. Accounts of his murder can be found in two Czech chronicles written during the reign of Charles IV. In the chronicle of František Pražský, there is a short entry about the death of the Silesian inquisitor. František (ca. 1290-1353/1362) was chaplain and confessor of Prague bishops John IV of Dražice and Arnošt of Pardubice. He was a well-informed chronicler, although he lacked the historical skills of Petr Žitavský, the author of the *Zbraslav Chronicle*, from which he drew extensively. His chronicle, written on the initiative of the Bishop of Prague, John IV of Dražice, refers to the chronicle of Kosmas and his successors. It begins with a description of the reign of Duke Wenceslaus I and ends in 1350. In 1341, František recorded the murder of an unnamed Dominican inquisitor from Poland, whom he describes as "an outstanding man" and "an excellent cleric" who was killed in the Prague friary of St Clement by heretics after celebrating the service and delivering a sermon.⁶³ In the *Czech Chronicle* of Beneš Weitmile of Krabice, written almost at the same time, Schwenkenfeld's death was described equally concisely. Beneš (d. 27 July 1375) was a Prague cathedral canon closely associated with Archbishop Arnošt of Pardubice and the court of Emperor Charles IV. Writing about Schwenkenfeld's death, he describes him as "a good man and distinguished person for the Church who was murdered in Prague by heretics." Beneš

⁶² See footnote 22.

⁶³ "Eodem anno [1341] Prage ad S. Clementem heretici interfecerunt inquisitorem hereticorum de Polonia ordinis Predicatorum, virum valentem et clericum excellentem, qui ipso die devote missam officaverat et optime predicaverat et rex ipsum assecuraverat, sic feliciter de hoc seculo nequam migravit". *Chronicon Francisci Pragensis*, wyd. J. Emler, in: *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum* 4, Praha 1884, p. 432.

Weitmile knew the circumstances of the attack; he knew that the assassins had lured John out of the Prague friary under the guise of an urgent confession.⁶⁴ The memory of Schwenkenfeld's murder was alive among the Dominicans of Prague. In their church of St Clement, there were even frescoes with a scene of Schwenkenfeld's martyrdom.⁶⁵

In the fifteenth-century chronicles dedicated to the history of Bohemia, including those of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini and Benedict Johnsdorf, there is no mention of Schwenkenfeld, although there is information about the conflict between the burghers of Wrocław and Bishop Nanker, as well as about the reconciliation between the inhabitants of Wrocław and Bishop Przeclaw of Pogorzela. Only in the extensive *Kronika česká* of the Visegrad canon Václav Hájek of Libočany (d. 1553), in the section related to the year 1341, does a concise note appear about the murder of a papal "envoy" who stayed as a guest in the Prague church of St Clement. Hájek calls him *Johannes de Musetis* and describes him as *exquisitor heretice pravitatis*. It is not known what the source of the Czech canon's knowledge was, but it must have been a severely distorted report he used for his account. Furthermore, Hájek writes that the murder took place in winter, when one morning one of the killers asked the "papal envoy" for confession. When John went down to the church entrance with a candle, he was attacked by several assassins and murdered.⁶⁶ Deprived of a broader context, the description by Hájek, an erudite and insightful chronicler, proves that, two hundred years after Schwenkenfeld's death, its memory was still significantly distorted. Information about the murder of the papal inquisitor, its time and place, remained vague, while the name and origin of the murdered person, as well as the broader context of this event, were blurred.

The memory of John of Schwenkenfeld developed differently in Polish historiography. The *Annals* of Jan Długosz are of key importance to this tradition. The Kraków chronicler mentioned the Silesian inquisitor three times, in entries under the years 1339, 1341, and 1342. His information is based solely on the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes*, which he quotes extensively in his own reedited form.⁶⁷ In 1339, Długosz describes, in a separate note, a trial conducted by Schwenkenfeld against the councillors and townspeople of Wrocław due to their disregard of church penalties and suspicions of heresy. Długosz developed and added colour to the text of the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes*, reconstructing the sermon the Dominican inquisitor had delivered in Wrocław. According to

64 "Eodem anno ocisus est inquisitor hereticorum ad sanctum Clementem in Praga, vir bonus et utilis ecclesie Dei, per quosdam hereticos, qui ad ipsum venerant, simulantes se illi velle confiteri". *Chronicon Benessi de Weitmil*, in: *Fontes rerum Bohemicarum* 4, p. 492.

65 *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 10, p. 481.

66 Václav Hájek z Libočan, *Kronika česká*, ed. J. Linka, Praha 2013, p. 728.

67 A. Semkowicz, *Krytyczny rozbiór Dziejów Polskich Jana Długosza (do roku 1384)*, Kraków 1887, pp. 357, 359, 360.

Długosz, Schwenkenfeld first delivered a sermon to the numerous inhabitants of Wrocław from a lectern placed in front of the city hall. The Kraków chronicler indicates that it took place on Sunday, though does not give an exact date. At the end of the sermon, he was to summon by name all Wrocław councillors and city judges to appear before him the next day to respond to the charges against them. When the defendant city authorities did not appear on the appointed day, the Dominican inquisitor, "inspired with fortitude by the Holy Spirit, went personally to the city hall and again admonished the Wrocław councillors and city judges gathered there not to delay any longer in returning to the bosom of the Church, because if they did otherwise they would incur punishment from God and people." When his call did not produce the intended effect, Schwenkenfeld left Wrocław, writes Długosz, "pursued by curses, insults, and chattering teeth."⁶⁸

Długosz's *Annals* became a source of knowledge about Schwenkenfeld for sixteenth-century Polish historiographers. Following his *Annals*, information about John of Schwenkenfeld was provided by Maciej Miechowita in *Chronica Polonorum*, published in 1521.⁶⁹ However, in the note about the conflict between the inhabitants of Wrocław and Nanker and the Wrocław clergy, the mention of Schwenkenfeld is marginal. It appears in the description of the procession of the inhabitants of Wrocław, which was intended as compensation for the harm done to the bishop and clergy who died in 1341, including "Inquisitor John" who died in 1341. However, information about the great fire in Wrocław, coming from the *Chronicle of Polish Princes* and taken from Długosz's *Annals*, is not interpreted by Miechowita in terms of God's punishment for the murder of the Dominican inquisitor. In turn, in *De origine et rebus gestis Polonorum*, published in 1555, Marcin Kromer wrote only about the conflict between the inhabitants of Wrocław and Bishop Nanker and their penitential pilgrimage. He neither mentioned Schwenkenfeld's death nor linked it to that conflict.⁷⁰

The murder of John of Schwenkenfeld had a wide echo in Dominican circles outside Silesia as well. Between 1342 and 1344, information about the death of the Silesian inquisitor was provided by the Milanese Dominican chronicler Galvano Fiamma (1283-1344) in the *Chronicon maius Ordinis Praedicatorum*. Fiamma was chaplain to the Archbishop of Milan, Giovanni Visconti, and regularly attended the general chapters of the Order of Preachers. The mention of the murder of the Silesian inquisitor, recorded in 1341, is one of the last in the chronicle of Fiamma, who died in 1344. Fiamma's note itself deserves detailed analysis. The Milanese chronicler wrote that in 1341:

⁶⁸ Jan Długosz, *Annales...*, pp. 213-214.

⁶⁹ Maciej Miechowita, *Chronica Polonorum*, Cracoviae 1521, p. 237.

⁷⁰ Marcin Kromer, *De origine et rebus gestis Polonorum libri XXX*, Coloniae Agrippinae 1584, p. 195.

"Brother Conrad, inquisitor of heretical iniquity in Bohemia, achieved the palm of martyrdom at the hands of heretics in Prague." He also wrote about the numerous miracles he performed and the efforts undertaken in the Roman Curia for his canonization.⁷¹

As can be easily noticed, Fiamma's information about Schwenkenfeld's murder was distorted. He incorrectly provided the name of the Silesian inquisitor, as well as the area where he conducted inquisitorial activities. The information about Schwenkenfeld's death was considered significant by the Milanese chronicler, since he added it after an extensive note on John XXII's confirmation of the privileges for the Order of Preachers on 5 April 1342. Just after it, a much shorter note was written about a silver reliquary for the head of St Peter of Verona worth 2,000 florins, funded by Archbishop Giovanni Visconti, and an interrupted note about the General Chapter held in Le Puy on 22 May 1344. Fiamma probably learned about the murder of the Silesian inquisitor from one of his fellow friars who participated in the 1342 General Chapter in Carcassonne. Although there is no mention of Schwenkenfeld in the chapter's files, it can be assumed that the murder of the Dominican inquisitor, which took place less than a year earlier, must have interested the Dominicans participating in the Chapter.⁷² It is possible that the details of this crime, which may have shocked the entire Dominican community, were provided by Przybysław of Płock, provincial of the Polish Dominicans, who took part in the 1342 Chapter.⁷³

After the documentation of the Prague inquisitor Havel, Galvano Fiamma's chronicle is the oldest source that describes the circumstances of Schwenkenfeld's death. It is also the first source confirming the developing cult of the Silesian inquisitor. Unfortunately, it is impossible to verify the information provided by Fiamma, neither about the miracles worked by the Silesian inquisitor nor the efforts for his canonization, which were to be undertaken in the Papal Curia less than a year after his death.⁷⁴ It is easy to understand the interest of the Milanese chronicler in the murder of the Silesian inquisitor. Fiamma served as inquisitor of Bologna in 1330, and at

71 "Eodem anno [1341] apud Pragam civitatem Bohemie fr. Conradus, heretice pravitatis in eodem provincia inquisitor, ab hereticis martirio coronatus est, qui etiam ibidem innumeris claruit miraculis. De cuius canonizatione in Romana curia multa tractata sunt, sed nihil factum est". *La Cronaca Maggiore dell'Ordine Domenicano di Gaviano Fiamma. Frammenti editi*, ed. G. Odetto, "Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum" 10 (1940), p. 370.

72 *Acta capitulorum generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum*. Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica, vol. 4, ed. B.M. Reichert, part 2, Romae 1899, pp. 279-284.

73 *Acta capitulorum provinciae Poloniae Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. R.F. Madura, vol. 1, Romae 1972, p. 13.

74 A different historiographic tradition shaped by the note in Galvano Fiamma's chronicle was pointed out by J. Szymański, who draws upon the studies of R.J. Loenertz. J. Szymański, *Joannes Swenkenfeldt...*, p. 16, footnote 88.

the same time carefully collected information about Peter of Verona, who became a model for Dominican inquisitors. In his chronicle, he described at length the martyrdom of Peter the Martyr and continuously recorded events related to his cult in the Dominican church in Milan. As Raymond Loenertz surmised, the misspelling of Schwenkenfeld's name could be considered a scribal error likely resulting from assigning to the Silesian inquisitor the name of Conrad of Marburg, a papal inquisitor operating in Germany and murdered in 1233.⁷⁵ It is worth noting that the content of the note about the Silesian inquisitor murdered in Prague is similar to the note on the death of Conrad of Marburg, whom Fiamma incorrectly recognized as a Dominican who had been accepted into the Order by St Dominic himself.⁷⁶

In the following centuries, the entry in Galvano Fiamma's chronicle became a source of knowledge for all Dominican historians writing about the inquisitor Conrad, murdered in Prague in 1341. Among others, at the turn of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Milanese Dominican and chronicler Ambrogio Taeggio (Ambrosius Taegius de Rognonibus, ca. 1461-1525/1528), from the friary of S. Maria delle Grazie, in the catalogue *De insigniis Ordinis Praedicatorum*, included "Conrad, murdered in Prague," among the Dominican martyrs. Following Fiamma's account, he wrote about "a very pious and holy man, a zealous preacher and an inquisitor devoted to fighting heresy, who was murdered in Prague by heretics." He also copied information about numerous miracles performed by the murdered inquisitor and the efforts made in the Roman Curia for his canonization. He added that, due to negligence, the canonization of Conrad (i.e., John of Schwenkenfeld) did not take place.⁷⁷

ABRAHAM BZOVIVS AND A NEW HAGIOGRAPHICAL TRADITION

A new stimulus to research on John of Schwenkenfeld was made by Polish Dominican historiographer and hagiographer Abraham Bzovius (1567-1637), who collected most of the written sources and worked hard to produce a fresh account of his death and cult.⁷⁸ Bzovius knew Fiamma's report on inquisitor

⁷⁵ R.J. Loenertz, *Les origines de l'ancienne historiographie dominicaine en Pologne*. Abraham Bzowski, "Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum" 19 (1949), p. 76.

⁷⁶ *La Cronaca Maggiore dell'Ordine Domenicano...*, pp. 352-353; cf. Gerard de Fracheto, *Vitae fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum necnon Cronica Ordinis ab anno MCCCIII usque ad MCCLIV*, Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum, vol. 1, ed. B.M. Reichert, Lovanium 1896, pp. 21-22.

⁷⁷ R.-J. Loenertz, *Une catalogue d'écrivains et deux catalogues de martyrs dominicains*, "Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum" 12 (1942), p. 99 and footnote 15.

⁷⁸ Initially R. Loenertz did not know where Bzovius took the information from, but in his later study on Bzovius he clearly indicated Fiamma's text as the Dominican hagiographer's source of knowledge about Schwenkenfeld. R.-J. Loenertz, *Une catalogue...*, p. 302, footnote 22; idem, *Les origines...*, pp. 76-77.

Conrad, who had been killed in 1341 in Prague, but he also had access to the Chronicle of Polish Dukes concerning the activities and dramatic death of John of Schwenkenfeld. Initially, Bzovius was unable to connect these two pieces of information and wrote about two inquisitors murdered in 1341: Conrad and John of Schwenkenfeld. While collecting materials for the history of the Polish Dominican province, Bzovius became interested in the figure of John of Schwenkenfeld and, in his writings, tried to restore the memory of the Silesian inquisitor-martyr. In the lives of St Hiacinthus (Polish: Jacek) and St Czesław, he showed Schwenkenfeld as a zealous inquisitor who suffered martyrdom at the hands of heretics. The information he provided about Schwenkenfeld is based on the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes*, which he knew from some distorted copy.⁷⁹ In the *Life of St Hiacinthus (Propago divi Hyacinthi)*, which is a systematic study of the history of the Polish Dominican province, John of Schwenkenfeld's murder took place in Wrocław and was perpetrated by local burghers.⁸⁰ It is hard to explain whether Bzovius found such information in some unknown source or if he himself concluded that Schwenkenfeld, who was in conflict with the townspeople of Wrocław, died there. It is possible that he found this information in a "very old manuscript" (*antiquissimus manuscriptus*) which, as he writes, was kept in the Kraków Dominican friary. As Raymond Loenertz assumes, this must have been an unpreserved Dominican chronicle or a catalogue *de viris illustribus*, which listed Dominican saints, provincials, and inquisitors.⁸¹

In *Propago divi Hyacinthi*, the description of Schwenkenfeld's activities and death occupies a key place in the chapter devoted to Dominican inquisitors. Specifically, it is placed after the documents cited in extenso regarding the activities of the Dominican inquisition in Polish lands: the bull of John XXII from 1 April 1318, appointing the first papal inquisitors in Polish lands, and the privilege of King Władysław Jagiellon for the inquisitor general Nicholas of Łęczycza from 1436. Among concise notes on the Dominican inquisitors, the account on Schwenkenfeld stands out for its size. As Bzovius writes, "saint John, the Wrocław inquisitor and martyr, surpassed all [inquisitors] in the severity of his judgments, turning out to be a steadfast guardian and defender of the faith (*fidei rigida custos et vindex, severitas censoria, merito ante omnes palmam protulit, Beato Ioanni Vratislaviensi inquisitori et martyri*)."⁸² In *Propago divi Hyacinthi*, Schwenkenfeld's inquisitorial activity was linked to the struggle against the errors of Peter John Olivi, leader

79 A different opinion is presented by J. Szymański (*Ruchy heretyckie...*, p. 131, footnote 75).

80 A. Bzovius, *Propago divi Hyacinthi thaumaturgi Poloni, seu de de rebus praeclare gestis in Provincia Poloniae Ordinis Praedicatorum commentarius*, Venetiis 1606, pp. 68-69.

81 R. Loenertz, *Les origines...*, pp. 75-77.

82 A. Bzovius, *Propago divi Hyacinthi...*, p. 68.

of the Franciscan Spirituals termed "*Johannes Pirensis*", which flowed into Silesia from Bohemia.⁸³ As Bzovius states, the Silesian inquisitor was supported by Bishop Nanker in his fight against heresy.

Schwenkenfeld's harsh actions were met with a hostile reaction from the Czech king John of Luxembourg. Following the inspiration of the Luxembourg and the instigation of the councillors, the Wrocław burgers attacked the friary of St Wojciech, dragged Schwenkenfeld out, and killed him in the street before the friary gate. As Bzovius further argues, as compensation for Schwenkenfeld's murder, Wrocław councillors went in a penitential procession to his grave in the church of St Wojciech. Only then did Bishop Przeclaw of Pogorzela lift the excommunication.⁸⁴ Despite his extensive research and undoubted historiographical passion, Bzovius lacked criticism and inquisitiveness in the analysis of the collected material. In *Propago divi Hyacinthi*, right after the description relating to Schwenkenfeld summarized above, he provided information selected from the Fiamma's chronicle about the inquisitor Conrad, who had been killed in Prague, which he failed to connect with the murder of Schwenkenfeld.⁸⁵

Two years later, in the *vita* of Czesław Odrowąż (*Tutelarior Silesiae*), Bzovius included a note about John of Schwenkenfeld being among the most eminent friars associated with the Wrocław convent. Referring to the Chronicle of Maciej Miechowita, he wrote about "saint John Schwenkenfeld (*beatus Johannes Swenkefeldt*), an inquisitor and martyr from Wrocław [who fought] against the heresy of John *Pirensis* [i.e. Peter John Olivi], heretical beguines (*contra haereticas Beguinas*), and the impiety of the Czech king John of Luxembourg for the Church and Bishop Nanker of Wrocław. He also provided information on his martyr's death, which took place on 6 October 1341. In addition, he was the first to mention the bloody cope of the murdered inquisitor preserved in the Wrocław friary, which he was able to view personally. Bzovius's account included information about a penitential procession of Wrocław townspeople to the Dominican church in 1341 (sic). Concluding the description, Bzovius pointed to the foundation of the Augustinian monastery of St Dorota as a votive offering of expiation by Emperor Charles IV for his father John

83 The form *Pirensis* used by Bzovius a distorted spelling of the adjective *Bitteriensis* referring to Béziers, the family town of Peter John Olivi (died 1298). Following Bzovius, this incorrect form was taken up by other historians who used his work. For Olivi's ideas, see R. Manselli, *L'idéal du Spirituel selon Pierre Jean-Olivi*, "Cahier de Fanjeaux" 10 (1975), pp. 99-126; S. Bylina, *Wizje społeczne w herezjach średniowiecznych. Humiliaci, beginki, begardzi*, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk 1974, pp. 157-164; D. Burr, *The Spiritual Franciscans From Protest to Persecution in the Century after Saint Francis*, University Park 2001, pp. 51-65.

84 A. Bzovius, *Propago divi Hyacinthi...*, pp. 68-69.

85 Ibidem, p. 69.

of Luxembourg's co-responsibility (*paterna culpa*) for the murder of the Silesian inquisitor.⁸⁶

It is worth noting that, in relation to the note concerning the *Life* of St Hyacinthus, *Tutelarior Silesiae* contained new and important details that Bzovius learned only during his stay in Wrocław. The Dominican historiographer provided the date of Schwenkenfeld's death, as well as information about the trial of the "heretical beguines." He either found this information in unknown written sources in the Wrocław convent (perhaps he read it from the inscription commemorating Schwenkenfeld), or it was given to him by the Dominicans from Wrocław. It is probably not a coincidence that, unlike *Propago divi Hyacinthi*, the *vita* of St Czesław did not provide any information about the place of death of the Silesian inquisitor. Bzovius used extensive knowledge about Schwenkenfeld in his continuation of *Annales ecclesiastici* by Cesarius Baronius, where, correcting an earlier error, he placed the murder of the Silesian inquisitor in the Prague convent of St Clement. He also supplemented the description of Schwenkenfeld's martyrdom with words spoken by the dying inquisitor, about which he also must have learned from the Dominicans in Wrocław. The dying Schwenkenfeld allegedly addressed his brothers, saying that "he was dying for truth, justice, and faith."⁸⁷

Abraham Bzovius was the first modern historiographer who, based on the *Chronicle of Polish Dukes*, wrote about the posthumous cult of John of Schwenkenfeld. The beginning of this cult was the penitential procession of Wrocław councillors to Schwenkenfeld's grave in the Dominican church in Wrocław, incorrectly placed under the year 1341. *Propago divi Hyacinthi* mentions numerous miracles taking place at his grave, but does not describe any of them in detail. Bzovius also writes about Schwenkenfeld's cope, stained with blood and bearing traces of blows, kept in the Wrocław friary, where he touched and kissed it with reverence.⁸⁸ In the *Annales ecclesiastici*, he repeated this information, writing that Schwenkenfeld's cope was preserved in excellent condition, untouched by moths.⁸⁹

Later Dominican chroniclers and hagiographers appropriated the information about John of Schwenkenfeld from the writings of Abraham Bzovius. The notes about this holy inquisitor-martyr can be found in historiographical works on the Order of Preachers penned in the seventeenth century by Giovanni

86 A. Bzovius, *Tutelarior Silesiae...*, pp. 27-28.

87 *Annalium ecclesiasticorum post Caesarem Baronium tomus XIII-XIX rerum gestarum ab anno 1198 ad annum 1535 narrationem complectens authore Abrahamo Bzovio*, vol. 14, Coloniae Agrippinae 1618, pp. 894-895. J. Szymański believes that Bzovius copied this fragment from "the lost *vita* of the inquisitor" (*Joannes Swenkenfeldt...*, p. 15, footnote 88).

88 A. Bzovius, *Propago divi Hyacinthi...*, p. 68; cf. J. Szymański, *Ruchy heretyckie...*, p. 131, footnote 75.

89 *Annalium ecclesiasticorum*, vol. 14, p. 895.

Michele Pio Plodius (1573-1643), Peter Malpeus (1591-1645), and Vincenzo Maria Fontana (1610-1679). Peter Malpeus constructed his description of Schwenkenfeld based exclusively on *Propago divi Hyacinthi*, although in the marginalia he also referred to the chronicles of Kromer and Miechowita. Following Bzovius, he wrote about the *vita* of John of Schwenkenfeld, located in the Kraków monastery. Presenting the circumstances of the martyrdom of the Silesian inquisitor, he pointed to his involvement in the conflict between Bishop Nanker on the one side, and John of Luxembourg and the Wrocław councillors on the other. In his account, Schwenkenfeld's murder was a consequence of too much zeal in performing his inquisitorial duties. When describing the murder itself, Malpeus followed *Propago divi Hyacinthi*, which placed it in Wrocław, ignoring the correction introduced by Bzovius in *Annales ecclesiastici*. According to his description, in the morning a group of Wrocław townspeople dragged Schwenkenfeld out of his cell in the Wrocław friary and into the street, where he was put to death with swords. The friars who ran out of the convent at the call of the dying inquisitor heard from him the words quoted in *Annales ecclesiastici* that he was dying for truth, justice, and the Catholic faith. Following Bzovius, he also provided information about the well-preserved cope of the murdered inquisitor with stains of his blood.⁹⁰

Like Malpeus, Vincenzo Fontana, in his 1675 work *Monumenta Dominicana*, prepared at the request of the Dominican superiors, repeated the information given by Bzovius in *Propago divi Hyacinthi* and *Annales ecclesiastici*.⁹¹ Specifically, he wrote about holy John Schwenkenfeld, an inquisitor who "fought valiantly against heretics in Germany." Unlike Malpeus, however, he judged the account from the *Annales ecclesiastici* to be more reliable, placing the martyrdom of the Silesian inquisitor in Prague. In Fontana's opinion, Schwenkenfeld was a "holy man" (*beatus Johannes*), a "famous wrestler of God" (*gloriosus Dei athleta*), and an "inquisitor zealously fulfilling his duties in the fight against heretics" (*in suo exequendo munere ardentissimo zelo in haereticos flagrans*). The description of Schwenkenfeld ends with information about numerous miracles that occurred through his intercession and efforts to obtain canonization by the Holy See.⁹²

In Polish early modern historiography, Bzovius's account was widely adopted by, among others, Szymon Okolski (1580-1653)⁹³ and Klemens

90 P. Malpaeus, *Palma fidei s. Ordinis Praedicatorum*, Antwerpen 1635, pp. 72-77.

91 V.M. Fontana, *Monumenta dominicana breviter in synopsis collecta ab Ordine Praedicatorum Sacntae Dei Ecclesiae usque ad modo praeestitis*, Romae 1675, pp. 212, 214, 217.

92 „Pluribus claruit miraculis post mortem, quibus permoti fideles apud Apostolicam Sedem egere, ut eum inter sanctos martyres solemniter ritu refferet”, *ibidem*, p. 212.

93 S. Okolski, *Russia florida rosis et liliis hoc est sanguine, praedicatione, religione et vita antea ff. Ordinis Praedicatorum peregrinatione inchoata, nunc conventuum in Russia stabilitate fundata*, Leopoli 1646, pp. 110 and 130.

Chodykiewicz (1715-1787). In Chodykiewicz's work, an extensive note on "Saint John of Schwenkenfeld" opens the catalogue of Dominican inquisitors. The Dominican historiographer states that Schwenkenfeld came from Świdnica and was an inquisitor in Wrocław. In Chodykiewicz's opinion, Schwenkenfeld had significant merits in the fight against the followers of Peter John Olivi. Following Bzovius's account in *Annales ecclesiastici*, he faithfully repeated the circumstances of Schwenkenfeld's death, correctly stating its location (St Clement friary in Prague) and date (6 October 1341). He also cited information about the fire in Wrocław, which was supposedly God's punishment for the inquisitor's murder. Following Bzovius, Chodykiewicz reported that Schwenkenfeld's body was placed in the Dominican church in Wrocław, where his bloody cope was also kept as a relic.⁹⁴

Bzovius's writings also became the main source of knowledge about Schwenkenfeld for Wawrzyniec Teleżyński, who in the second half of the eighteenth century produced his own work on the history of the Polish Dominican province. In his treatment of Schwenkenfeld, he followed Bzovius's *Propago divi Hyacinthi*. His account presented the conflict between the Wrocław council and King John of Luxembourg with Bishop Nanker, in which Schwenkenfeld participated. Teleżyński copied fragments from Bzovius's work describing the death of the inquisitor at the hands of Wrocław's burghers; their reconciliation with Bishop Przeclaw of Pogorzela; and the great fire that devastated the city in 1342. He also provided information about Schwenkenfeld's blood-stained cope kept in the Wrocław friary. Unlike Bzovius, however, Teleżyński knew Długosz's detailed account of Schwenkenfeld's death and the trial of his assassins. An extensive excerpt from the ninth book of the *Annals* was given as a footnote to Teleżyński's study.⁹⁵ It may be surprising that, knowing Długosz's account, which correctly marked Prague as the place of Schwenkenfeld's death, Teleżyński found the information from *Propago divi Hyacinthi* more credible. Unfortunately, not knowing Bzovius's *Annales ecclesiastici*, he separated his treatment of Schwenkenfeld from a story about the inquisitor Conrad, murdered in 1341 in Prague. Here, he also wrote about the numerous miracles occurring through the intercession of the murdered inquisitor, as well as the efforts to canonize him, recalling a fragment of the Fiamma's chronicle used by Bzovius.⁹⁶

To Bzovius goes credit for the introduction of the memory of John of Schwenkenfeld into the sanctorale of the Polish Dominican province. A good example of a liturgical celebration of Schwenkenfeld's memory is

⁹⁴ K. Chodykiewicz, *De rebus gestis in Provincia Russiae Ordinis Praedicatorum commentarius libris XI digestus in duas partes divisus, diversarum antiquitatum monumentis et observationibus illustrates*, Berdyczoviae 1780, pp. 302-304.

⁹⁵ W. Teleżyński, *De rebus gestis...*, pp. 106-8.

⁹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 108.

offered by the popular work of Michał Siejkowski (1695-1752). On 6 October Siejkowski recorded the memory of "Saint John Swenkenfelt, inquisitor and martyr." Adopting the account from *Propago divi Hyacinthi*, he briefly described the circumstances of the death of the inquisitor who, dragged from his monastery cell by heretics, "was dragged through the streets, beaten, hit until his brain fell out of his head, and, then, pierced with a sword; he surrendered his spirit to God for the holy faith."⁹⁷

From Bzovius's works, the description of Schwenkenfeld's murder entered Czech historiography, as evidenced by the chronicle of the Prague Jesuit Bohuslav Balbinus (1621-1688). In 1341, in *Epitome historica rerum Bohemicarum* (III.18), Balbinus describes the death of the "holy man" John Schwenkenfeld of Świdnica, a Dominican inquisitor in Silesia. He correctly presents the circumstances of his murder embedding it in the conflict between Bishop Nanker and the Wrocław councillors. Following Bzovius, he reports that the murder was committed by two assassins hired by the Wrocław councillors.⁹⁸ After the short description regarding Schwenkenfeld, in a single sentence he also mentions another Dominican inquisitor named Conrad, who died around the same time on the orders of King John of Luxembourg.⁹⁹ As the first and only author, Balbinus wrote about a papal document (*litterae apostolicae*), he found, which recognized Schwenkenfeld as a saint and martyr.¹⁰⁰ Balbinus's account of Schwenkenfeld's death is based on Bzovius's *Annales ecclesiastici* and Peter Malpeus's *Palma fidei*. Actually, the note on the "canonization charter" is his only original contribution to the information on Schwenkenfeld's post mortem cult. Unfortunately, the Czech Jesuit neither provided any details concerning the origins of the document he mentioned nor did he even date it. Thus it is hard to give credibility to his information on Schwenkenfeld's canonization.

Bzovius's works became a key source of knowledge about Schwenkenfeld also for early modern Silesian historiography. His account was repeated almost verbatim in *Silesiographia renovata* by Nicholas Henel (*Henelius*, 1582-1656), published in 1613. The only element added to Bzovius's narrative concerned Schwenkenfeld's education. Henel emphasized that the murdered

97 M. Siejkowski, *Dni roczne Świątych, błogosławionych, wielbnych i pobożnych sług boskich Zakonu Kaznodziejskiego S. Ojca Dominika*, Kraków 1743, without pagination.

98 "Ad annum 1341 atrox illud facinus pertinet, quod in Ioanne Svenckfeldio Svidnicensi Praedicatorum Ordinis, haereticae pravitatis per Silesiam inquisitore patratum est ... Huius viri sancti mortem innocentissimam et singulari miraculo consignam Bzovius et Petrus Malpaeus describunt", B. Balbinus *Epitome historica rerum Bohemicarum* Praha 1677, pp. 342-343.

99 Ibidem, p. 343.

100 "De b[ea]to Ioanne in MMSS [manuscriptis] Codicibus, Apostolicas literas inveni, in quibus illi, velut Martyri, inter Divos cultus, dies item eius sanctae memoriae consecratus decernitur. B. Balbinus *Epitome historica rerum Bohemicarum*", ibidem.

inquisitor had been “an excellent theologian” (*theologus eximius*), thus glossing the information on his theological training.¹⁰¹

In the nineteenth century, the Dominican hagiographic tradition was continued by the Lviv Dominican Sadok Barącz (1812-1892). In his synthetic two-volume work on the history of the Order of Preachers in Poland, published in 1860-1861, he uncritically repeated Bzovius's accounts from *Propago divi Hyacinthi* and *Tutelariorum Silesiae*, separating the Wrocław inquisitor John, murdered by the townspeople of Wrocław in 1341, from the inquisitor Conrad, killed in Prague the same year, he claims, on the orders of King John of Luxembourg. Not only did Barącz's description not bring any new knowledge about Schwenkenfeld, but it was downright regressive. Barącz confused Schwenkenfeld's name and knew nothing about his inquisitorial activities in Silesia. Furthermore, he transformed the conflict between the inhabitants of Wrocław and Bishop Nanker into a dispute between the inquisitor and King John of Luxembourg, described as the protector of heresy and the person who ordered the murder of the Silesian inquisitor. In Barącz's opinion, it was on Luxembourg's initiative that the Wrocław townspeople murdered Schwenkenfeld. He added that the murder of the inquisitor was a consequence of his fight against the “Czech heresy” instilled by Peter John Olivi. The entire narrative on the murder, which became particularly dramatic under Barącz's pen, is an adaptation of Bzovius's account from the *vita* of St Hiacinthus. The Lviv Dominican emphasized, on the one hand, the religious zeal and courage of the Wrocław inquisitor, and, on the other, the brutality of his executioners.¹⁰²

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, in late medieval and modern historiography, John of Schwenkenfeld, a Dominican lector and later prior of the convent of St Cross in Świdnica, was perceived primarily as an uncompromising inquisitor who had suffered martyrdom in the service of the Church. The information about his inquisitorial activities transmitted from the mid-fourteenth century concerned almost exclusively the trial against the Wrocław councillors who had rebelled against Bishop Nanker and filled the churches with unlicensed priests. The most important element of the memory of Schwenkenfeld shaped in this way was his martyr's death. As I have tried to demonstrate, shortly after his murder, the Dominicans in Wrocław attempted to promote his cult

101 Nicolaus Henelius ab Hennenfeld, *Silesiographia renovata, necessariis scholiis, observationibus et indice avcta* Francofurti 1613, pp. 573-575; More on this subject in J. Szymański, *Joaanes Sweneknfeldt...*, pp. 14-15, footnote 86.

102 S. Barącz, *Rys dziejów Zakonu Kaznodziejskiego w Polsce*, vol. 1, Lwów 1861, pp. 151-152.

and receive its recognition by the Holy See. Their efforts, about which little is known, must have been ephemeral and ended up in failure.

In the early modern historiographic tradition, the information about John of Schwenkenfeld took the form of a hagiographic legend about the holy inquisitor who had been assassinated by heretics. In this legend, the facts of Schwenkenfeld's life, including the circumstances of his death, gave way to the imagination of historiographers and hagiographers about the holy inquisitor-martyr modelled upon St Peter of Verona. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, this legend was given a new form by Abraham Bzovius, who collected scattered information about Schwenkenfeld in three of his works. His writings, especially his most popular *Life of St Hyacinthus* (*Propago divi Hyacinthi*), remained key sources of knowledge about John of Schwenkenfeld until the mid-twentieth century. Only in recent years has the study of unknown and poorly researched sources, such as the interrogation records concerning the Świdnica beguines from 1332, made it possible to show the Silesian inquisitor in a new light: as both a well-trained theologian and an influential member of the elite of Polish Dominicans in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. Hopefully further research will provide new details about the activities of this Dominican friar from Świdnica, who was killed in Prague in 1341.

ABSTRACT

The article is intended, on the one hand, to reconstruct the biography of John of Schwenkenfeld, a Dominican theologian, lector and prior at the Świdnica monastery, as well as a papal inquisitor in the dioceses of Wrocław and Lubusz, and on the other hand, to analyse the post mortem cult of the friar preacher, who was murdered in 1341. In recent years, thanks to new research on the papal inquisition in Silesia and the Silesian Dominican friaries, new information has emerged on John of Schwenkenfeld, his background, career, education and inquisition activities. They have shed light on this Dominican inquisitor, who in the second and third decades of the fourteenth century was one of the best educated and most influential friars of the Polish Dominican province. Schwenkenfeld's training and his excellent grasp of theological controversies of his days are evidenced by the testimonies he gathered during the 1332 interrogations of the Świdnica Beguines. John of Schwenkenfeld was the second papal inquisitor active in the diocese of Wrocław from 1330. In his inquisitorial activities, he worked closely with Bishop Nanker of Wrocław, whom he firmly supported in the conflict with the city council of Wrocław. It was this conflict that became the immediate cause of his death when, in early September 1341, he appeared in Prague to testify in an arbitration trial before King John of Luxembourg of Bohemia.

The article reexamines the circumstances of Schwenkenfeld's murder at Prague's Dominican friary of St Clement. His assassination, commissioned by the councillors of Wrocław, gave impetus to the development of a posthumous cult. The inquisitor's body was brought from Prague to Wrocław, and his grave in one of the chapels of St Adalbert's

Church became a shrine visited by pilgrims. Shortly after Schwenkenfeld's death, Polish Dominicans made attempts to canonize him. Developing the cult of Schwenkenfeld, traces of which are visible in sources from the second half of the fourteenth century, he was portrayed as a saintly inquisitor and martyr. New attempts to revive the cult of Schwenkenfeld were made in the second half of the sixteenth century, but scanty information about his life and death available to Dominican hagiographers produced distorted accounts, in which the circumstances of his murder were mischaracterized. Despite the lack of formal recognition of Schwenkenfeld's cult by the Holy See, for a very long time Polish Dominicans have preserved the memory of the Silesian inquisitor, who died a martyr's death in the service of the Church, first of all thanks to the hagiographic and historiographical works of Abraham Bzovius.

Key words: John of Schwenkenfeld, Silesia, Dominican hagiography, papal inquisitor, Dominican martyr

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SPYTEK OF MELSZTYN AND THE VORSKLA



Some time ago, on the sidelines of broader reflections, I wrote that the participation of Spytek of Melsztyn in the march of Vytautas' army, which ended in the battle of the Vorskla, is the most interesting element of the Grand Duke's entire escapade. It is an issue that awaits proper research.¹ I made the statement for a reason, as practically no one has addressed this issue so far. The logic behind Spytko's decision seemed obvious enough and therefore there proved no need for further exploration. There was nothing to investigate since he was considered one of the "most devoted defenders of the political thought of the great Lithuanian [Jagiełło - J.N.]" who "opposed the incorporation programme to the end of his life and finally lost it at the Vorskla in an expedition which, with the expected conquest of the East, was to secure the royal crown on Vytautas' head".² This is especially true in view of the fact that an excellent monographer of the Leliwa coat of arms family from Tarnów who, for obvious reasons, researched Spytek's fate most thoroughly, stated that the Voivode of Krakow approved of the king's policy to such an extent that Jadwiga, opposed to the expedition, "was unable to dissuade Spytko of Melsztyn. The Tartar problem was too important for him; as lord of Podolia, he could not remain indifferent

¹ J. Nikodem, *Polska i Litwa wobec husyckich Czech w latach 1420-1433. Studium o polityce dynastycznej Władysława Jagiełły i Witolda Kiejstutowicza*, Oświęcim 2015², footnote 133, p. 75 (1st ed. Poznań 2004).

² E. Maleczyńska, *Spółeczeństwo polskie wobec zagadnień zachodnich (studia nad dynastyczną polityką Jagiellonów)*, Wrocław 1947, pp. 16-17.

to an expedition which, if successful, would ensure peace on the south-eastern borders of Rus".³

I do not agree with this point of view. In fact, it is not just that I have a different opinion on the relations between Jagiełło and Vytautas during the period of interest. First of all, I am convinced that the findings on the role played by Spytko of Melsztyn in the late 1390s are disappointing. Especially since, as it commonly happens, they reflect too many contradictions. On the other hand, I believe that a new line of enquiry emerges from studying the king's behaviour towards Spytko's family after his death. I make it clear that my proposal is not of an evidential nature, because it cannot be. This time, tangible proof must give way to circumstantial evidence, or indirect evidence. I hope to present a volume of circumstantial evidence which, when considered in its totality, will lead to an inescapable conclusion.

* * *

Spytek, that "first (chronological) favourite of Władysław II Jagiełło"⁴ was probably more than just the king's favourite, being the son of Jan of Melsztyn, the castellan of Krakow.⁵ Needless to say, family ties boosted his career, a most brilliant career at that.⁶ Chronicler Jan Długosz (if he can be trusted) wrote in 1383 that Spytek became Voivode of Krakow when *non-dum ... supergressus erat* eighteen years⁷ that is, he was born in 1364 rather than 1363. Even if Spytek was a few years older than the chronicler thought him to be, he still assumed an extremely responsible and prestigious office at a young age. Undoubtedly, the king must have had absolute confidence in him. In 1395, keeping the eastern part for himself, to him *suis liberis, heredibus et legitimis successoribus donacione perpetua et irrevocabili dedimus, donavimus, contulimus, assignavimus* western Podolia *pleno iure ducali, quo ceteri nostri duces Lithuanie et Russie frui soliti sunt, omnibusque aliis iuribus et*

3 W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy. Z dziejów możnowładztwa małopolskiego wiek XIV-XV*, Warszawa 1971, p. 116.

4 J. Sperka, *Faworyci Władysława Jagiełły*, in: *Faworyci i opozycjoniści. Król i elity polityczne w Rzeczypospolitej XV-XVIII wieku*, ed. M. Markiewicz, R. Skowron, Kraków 2006, p. 43.

5 Formerly Sandomierz voivode and between 1373 and 1375(6) also a starost of Krakow, see *Urzędnicy małopolscy XII-XV wieku. Spisy*, ed. J. Kurtyka, T. Nowakowski, F. Sikora, A. Sochacka, P.K. Wojciechowski, B. Wyrozumska, A. Gąsiorowski, Wrocław etc. 1990, pp. 225, 265, 286.

6 Since 1381 voivode of Krakow, between 1383 and 1386 starost of Bytów, from 1390 to 16 May 1398 (last confirmed date, his successor confirmed since 30 June 1399) starost of Krakow, see *Urzędnicy małopolscy...*, pp. 128, 279, 286, 287.

7 *Joannis Dlugossii Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae*, lib. 10 (henceforth: Długosz), Warszawa 1985, p. 121.

dominio.⁸ From then on, Spytko's title was *dominus et haeres ducatus Podoliensis et Samboriensis*⁹ (in short: *dominus Podoliensis*, *dominus Podolie universis*, *dominus terre Podolie*, *dominus Podoliae*¹⁰).

The Podolia grant elevated Spytko's domain to limits virtually unattainable for other Polish magnates.¹¹ It was also clearly superior to the other hereditary dominion that Spytek received from the king in 1387 - the Sambir region.¹² After a month, it was confirmed in Jadwiga's document.¹³ There is no reason to claim that Jagiełło's grant served to attract Spytko to the royal camp. After all, he had been a part of it constantly since the very beginning of Jagiełło's reign in Poland.¹⁴ Włodzimierz Dworzaczek was absolutely right that "personal and dynastic" considerations were decisive in the Podolia affair, and that Spytek's loyalty guaranteed the success of Jagiełło's plans for this land. At the same time, he was wrong claiming that the king "did not want to deplete his Lithuanian fatherland for the time being by incorporating part of it into the Crown. Besides, incorporation of the land conquered by Vytautas would undoubtedly have provoked the prince's strong opposition and would have further aggravated an already tense situation".¹⁵ For the dispute was not between Poland and Lithuania, it was between Jagiełło and Vytautas. Because of this, the king did not place Podolia under his cousin's administration. Otherwise, such a grant would have been both natural and justified.¹⁶ It has not been confirmed in any source,

8 *Archiwum książąt Lubartowiczów Sanguszków w Sławucie*, vol. 1 (henceforth: AS), ed. L. Radziwiński, B. Gorczak, Lviv 1887, no. 19. *Codex epistolaris Vitoldi magni ducis Lithuaniae 1376-1430* (henceforth: CEV), A. Prochaska, Kraków 1882, no. 115. See also Długosz, lib. 10, p. 217.

9 *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich*, vol. 4 (henceforth: ZDM), ed. S. Kuraś, I. Sułkowska-Kuraś, Kraków-Wrocław 1969, no. 1122.

10 CEV, no. 136; *Kodeks dyplomatyczny księstwa mazowieckiego*, J.T. Lubomirski, Warszawa 1863, no. 129; *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski*, vol. 4 (henceforth: KDM), F. Piekosiński, Kraków 1882, no. 1039; *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Archiwum tzw. Bernardyńskiego we Lwowie*, vol. 6 (henceforth: AGZ), ed. X. Liske, Lviv 1876, no. 6; ZDM, vol. 4, no. 1138.

11 Details about its scope and significance W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, pp. 120-125.

12 Spytek's title: *heres et dominus districtus Samboriensis; haeres Melszthinensis et Samboriensis*, see AGZ, vol. 6, no. 2; ZDM, vol. 4, p. 73.

13 ZDM, vol. 6, Wrocław etc. 1974, no. 1843. O. Halecki, *Jadwiga Andegaweńska i kształtowanie się Europy Środkowowschodniej*, transl. M. Borowska-Sobótka, Kraków 2000, pp. 221, 239, 254, he called Spytek a 'collaborator', a 'loyal associate' and a 'faithful supporter' of Jadwiga. This was probably the case, although it would be more accurate to say that Spytek was a loyal and faithful collaborator of the royal couple.

14 Details in J. Nikodem, *Jadwiga król Polski*, Wrocław 2009, *passim*.

15 W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, pp. 112-113. Earlier, also J. Skrzypek, *Południowo-wschodnia polityka Polski od koronacji Jagiełły do śmierci Jadwigi i bitwy nad Worskłą (1386-1399)*, Lwów 1936, pp. 106-107.

16 The hypothesis of R. Frost is pure speculation, *The Oxford History of Poland-Lithuania*, vol. 1, *Making of the Polish-Lithuanian Union, 1386-1569*, Oxford 2015, p. 87 (Polish edition:

either (apart from a biased mention by Długosz, who incidentally got the date wrong¹⁷), that Jadwiga did not approve of giving western Podolia to Spytek.¹⁸ Without going into detail and leaving out the most obvious issues, it suffices to compare the witness lists of the two grants and the later document of the royal couple for Spytek of 1397¹⁹ to find information about it.

Contrary to what Stanisław Smolka falsely believed, the election of the Voivode of Krakow was not at Vytautas' discretion.²⁰ This should be topped with a much more important issue: while ruling Podolia, Spytek of Melsztyn was not subject to the authority of Vytautas.²¹ Years ago, Anatol

Oksfordzka historia unii polsko-litewskiej, I. I: Powstanie i rozwój 1385-1569, transl. T. Fiedorek, Poznań 2018, pp. 150-151); he believes that Jagiełło accepted "the dispossession of the Gediminids" which resulted from the Ostrów agreement of 1392 (I would love to see a fragment of the agreement that proves this!). The king "was closely involved in it, although he did not always indulge Vytautas, as his 1395 grant of Podolia to his Polish favourite, Spytek of Melsztyn, >cum pleno iure ducale<, demonstrated". In other words, he allowed his brothers to be "dispossessed", especially Skirgaila, who was loyal to him to the very end, and exalted Spytek at Vytautas' expense. Apparently, he felt a greater fondness for Spytek, only, unfortunately, the sources neglected to mention this fondness.

17 Długosz, lib. 10, p. 217.

18 For example, W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 113; J. Wyrozumski, *Królowa Jadwiga między epoką piastowską i jagiellońską*, Kraków 1997, p. 113; R. Frost, *The Oxford History...*, p. 88 (in the Polish version pp. 152-153) - it includes statements that are completely detached from reality and sources: "Jadwiga was emerging as a powerful figure in her own right". And together with her court she became also "a magnet for those who wished to execute and institutionalize the incorporationist interpretation of Krewa".

19 AGZ, vol. 6, no. 6.

20 S. Smolka, *Witold pod Grunwaldem*, in: idem, *Szkice historyczne*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1882, pp. 49-50. In a much more moderate way, this opinion was expressed by W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 11, and footnote 58; and his follower J. Kurtyka, *Tęczyńscy. Studium z dziejów polskiej elity możnowładczej w średniowieczu*, Kraków 1997, p. 215. Dworzaczek claimed that Spytek's 'former intimate relations [...] with Vytautas and his support for the king at times of hardship also paid off'. The historian referred to the proposal of A. Prochaska in his *Dzieje Witolda wielkiego księcia Litwy*, Kraków 2008² (ed. 1, Wilno 1914), p. 56; and O. Halecki in *Dzieje unii jagiellońskiej*, vol. 1: *W wiekach średnich*, Warszawa 2013² (ed. 1 - Kraków 1919), p. 140. Without denying the fact that Spytek and Jan Tarnowski may have been formerly in Vytautas' favour, it must be emphasised that Prochaska's reference from the so-called Vytautas' Complaint (*Scriptores rerum Prussicarum* (henceforth: SRP), vol. 2, Leipzig 1863, p. 713) linked chronologically to the alleged granting of Lutsk to Vytautas by the king in 1389. Unfortunately, the latter hypothesis does not stand up to scrutiny, see J. Nikodem, *Witold wielki książę litewski (1354 lub 1355 – 27 października 1430)*, Kraków 2013, pp. 93-96, 119-120.

21 Subordination was covered, for example, by O. Halecki, *Dzieje unii...*, pp. 148, 160, see also ibidem, *Wcielenie i wznowienie państwa litewskiego przez Polskę (1386-1401)*, in: ibidem, *Unia jagiellońska i misja dziejowa Polski. Wybór pism*, preface M. Kornat, footnotes R. Łatka, Kraków [not dated]², pp. 154-155; L. Kolankowski, *Dzieje Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego za Jagiellonów*, vol. I (1377-1499), Oświęcim 2014² (1st ed. Warszawa 1930), p. 72 (was a "political and military" subject); W. Maciejewska, *Jadwiga królowa polska*, Kraków 1934, p. 94.

Lewicki aptly stated that according to the royal grant deed, Podolia "belonged neither to Lithuania nor to Poland, but to Jagiełło himself, part indirectly, part directly".²² To see this, it is enough to look at the wording in Jagiełło's privilege: *nostrae castra; nostra Podolie; [...] Medzibosze, Bozske et Winnicza [...] pro nobis et nostris successoribus totaliter reservamus*.²³ Besides, in 1395 Vytautas was only the governor of the hospodar in Lithuania. From this it follows that, since the other Gediminids were not subject to Skirgiełło, the previous governor,²⁴ were not subject to Kęstutis' son, either. Last but not least, as noted and emphasised by Henryk Łowmiański, Spytek received Podolia "with a fuller right than other Lithuanian dukes held their districts".²⁵

In the following years, Spytek was a leading politician putting forward the dynasty's plans, often in a very active and responsible manner, accompanying the royal couple, and as an arbitrator. In 1396, Spytek led an armed expedition against Vladislaus II of Opole.²⁶ The same time marked the engagement of his daughter to Bernard, Duke of Niemodlin, nephew of Vladislaus II of Opole.²⁷ In 1397, as a representative of the royal couple, Spytek travelled to Suceava for talks with hospodar Stefan.²⁸ In the same year, he was also among the dignitaries accompanying Jagiełło and Jadwiga to their meeting with Sigismund of Luxemburg in Stara Wieś.²⁹ In the spring of the following year, he became an arbitrator in a dispute between the Mazovian princes Siemowit I and Janusz I the Old.³⁰ All this indicates that in the sources - until the end of the first half of 1398 at least - there are no traces of the lord and heir of Podolia and Sambir land distancing himself from the royal policy.

22 A. Lewicki, *Powstanie Świdrygiełły. Ustęp z dziejów Litwy z Koroną*, Oświęcim 2015² (1st ed. - Kraków 1892), p. 28.

23 CEV, no. 115.

24 S. Kutrzeba, *Unia Polski z Litwą*, [in:] *Polska i Litwa w dziejowym stosunku*, Warszawa etc. 1914, pp. 474-475.

25 H. Łowmiański, *Wcielenie Litwy do Polski w 1386 r.*, in: *idem, Prusy - Litwa - Krzyżacy*, selection, foreword, and afterword M. Kosman, Warszawa 1989², pp. 362-363.

26 See J. Sperka, *Władysław książę opolski, wieluniński, kujawski, dobrzyński, pan Rusi, palatyn Węgier i namiestnik Polski (1326/1330 – 8 lub 18 maja 1401)*, Kraków 2012, p. 226, and the subsequent ones.

27 Długosz, lib. 10, p. 219.

28 J. Skrzypek, *Polityka południowo-wschodnia...*, p. 59; I. Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, Poznań 1996, p. 62. Probably not without reason, in his *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 115, W. Dworzaczek claimed that it was Spytek who was entrusted with the matter of managing policy towards Moldavia and Wallachia.

29 See J. Skrzypek, *Południowo-wschodnia polityka...*, pp. 92-93; Z.H. Nowak, *Polityka północna Zygmunta Luksemburskiego do roku 1411*, Toruń 1964, pp. 67-69.

30 A. Supruniuk, *Otoczenie księcia mazowieckiego Siemowita IV (1374-1426). Studium o elicie politycznej Mazowsza na przełomie XIV i XV wieku*, Warszawa 1998, pp. 43, 180.

An attempt to ascertain why Spytek marched with Vytautas against Temür Qutlugh requires a more detailed analysis of the political situation in 1398-1399. Historiography, both older and contemporary, continues to underestimate a fundamental aspect of medieval politics, namely the dynastic interest. I fail to comprehend on what basis Robert Frost wrote that Jagiełło and Vytautas interacted because they shared a common interest, with the king intending "to form a common front with him in defence of his patrimony".³¹ Considering primarily Vytautas' policy on the Teutonic Knights (although there was more at stake), this common front is not reflected in the sources. Vytautas, having no mandate to do so, acted as an independent ruler in his relations with the Teutonic Order from approximately the mid-1390s. It was clearly against Jagiełło's interests, as he undermined his powers of a hospodar in Lithuania. All the more so, he could not have been an ally "in defence of the king's own patrimony", since the only one who questioned this patrimony was Vytautas, even if he did not verbalise it (although the Salinas Agreements of 1398 can undoubtedly be regarded as such a manifestation).

If there was no other evidence (and there is quite a lot of it, such as the Grand Master's letter to the Electors of the Reich, in which he accused Jagiełło of obstructing the peace between the Teutonic Order and Lithuania³²), the granting of Spytek's Podolia to Švitrigaila (which I mention below) rather than to Vytautas can be considered conclusive.

In historiography, Jan von Posilge's mention of a letter sent by Jadwiga to the royal governor was considered to be a step that pushed Vytautas into the arms of the Teutonic Order. She was to demand the payment of rents from Lithuania and Ruthenia, which Jagiełło opposed.³³ This prompted

31 R. Frost, *The Oxford History...*, p. 88 (in the Polish version, p. 153). Earlier, on the common policy of the two Gediminids before the Treaty of Salynas, see (I cite only one example by a historian, but a significant one) O. Halecki, *Wcielenie i wznowienie...*, pp. 162-166; idem, *Dzieje unii...*, p. 154 and the subsequent pages; idem, *Jadwiga Andegaweńska...*, p. 246, and the subsequent pages.

32 *Codex diplomaticus Prussicus. Urkundensammlung zur altern Geschichte Preussens*, vol. 5, ed. J. Voigt (henceforth: CDP), Königsberg 1857, no. 99.

33 *Johann's von Posilge Officials von Pomesanien Chronik des Landes Preussens*, in: SRP, vol. 3, Leipzig 1866, p. 219. See also A. Lewicki, *Powstanie Świdrygiełły...*, pp. 44-45; O. Halecki, *Wcielenie i wznowienie...*, pp. 157-161; idem, *Dzieje unii...*, pp. 152-153; J. Dąbrowski, *Dzieje Polski średniowiecznej*, vol. 2, between 1333 and 1506, ed. J. Wyrozumski, Kraków 1995, p. 251; W. Maciejewska, *Jadwiga królowa...*, pp. 106-107; W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 116 (with the unsubstantiated remark that this harmed not only Vytautas but also the king "by casting doubt on his dynastic rights to the Grand Duchy"); K. Neitmann, *Die Staatsverträge des Deutschen Ordens in Preussen 1230-1449*, Wien 1986, pp. 151-152; J. Krzyżaniakowa, J. Ochmański, *Władysław II Jagiełło*, Wrocław 1990, p. 169; G. Błaszczuk, *Dzieje stosunków polsko-litewskich od czasów najdawniejszych do współczesności*, vol. 2, *Od Krewa do Lublina*, part 1, Poznań 2007, pp. 79-80 (This work contains a remark that is as unbelievable as it is detached from source reality - that Jadwiga's letter "was

Vytautas to conclude a perpetual peace between Lithuania and both branches of the Order on the island of Salynas on the Neman in October 1398. It is noteworthy that the peace involved extremely onerous conditions imposed on Vytautas.³⁴ This marked the ratification of the Grodno Preliminaries of April that year.³⁵ Significantly, historiography has neglected this issue or simply has failed to notice it; it was agreed in Grodno that at the Grand Master's request, Vytautas would be able to seek the king's approval of the covenant, but in Salynas this provision was omitted. The reason I mention this are opinions on the alleged collaboration between Jagiełło and Vytautas because literature on the subject tends to indicate a rather close cooperation of the cousins in the Teutonic policy.³⁶ It was intended to be much broader.

Based on earlier information from a Teutonic deputy, dating from February 1398, which states that Jagiełło tried to obtain permission from the pope for Vytautas' coronation,³⁷ a conclusion was drawn that there was consistent

an attempt - perhaps even a desperate one - to hinder, to limit the policy of Władysław Jagiełło and Vytautas, leading to the full independence of Lithuania, *i.e.*, to a real break with the Union of Krevo. It can also be interpreted as an attempt to break the Polish-Lithuanian union, or at least its Krevo model"); R. Frost, *The Oxford History...*, p. 89. The same train of thought has also been followed recently by D. Wróbel, *Elity polityczne Królestwa Polskiego wobec problemu krzyżackiego w czasach Władysława Jagiełły*, Lublin 2016, pp. 98-100, who, firstly, believes in Vytautas' collaboration with Jagiełło in 1397-1398, because it is "mentioned unequivocally by the Teutonic Knights in their internal correspondence" (p. 100), but who earlier (p. 98) rightly said about this information that "it is not known if it is true, because it is unknown from elsewhere", and secondly, believes in Jadwiga's demand for rents. In contrast, A. Strzelecka's noteworthy reticence about the rents mentioned has been maintained in her *O królowej Jadwidze. Studja i przyczynki*, Lviv 1933, pp. 37-40. This was regarded as a conjecture of the Teutonic chronicler by A. Prochaska, *Przyczynki krytyczne do dziejów unii*, Kraków 1896, pp. 47-49. For a detailed discussion of the issue, see J. Nikodem, *Jadwiga...*, pp. 341-344.

34 *Die Staatsverträge des Deutschen Ordens in Preußen im 15. Jahrhundert*, vol. 1 (1398-1437), ed. E. Weise (henceforth: SDO), Königsberg 1939, no. 2; *Liv-, Est- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch*, vol. 4, ed. F.G. von Bunge (henceforth: LEC), Reval 1859, no. 1478-1479; CEV, no. 187-188.

35 SDO, no. 1; LEC, vol. 4, no. 1470; CEV, no. 179.

36 By way of example only, as a full list would have to be very long: W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 116 ("on his own, but not without Jagiełło's knowledge"); G. Błaszczyk, *Dzieje stosunków...*, p. 176; R. Frost, *The Oxford History...*, p. 89; in the Polish version p. 154 (evidence of "the quarrel" between Jadwiga and Jagiełło, as the lords of Krakow were concerned that Jagiełło would "take any steps to incorporate Lithuania"). Particularly noteworthy are the opinions of the historians who claimed that Jagiełło did not support Vytautas' Salynas policy, see R. Heck, *Polska w dziejach politycznych Europy od połowy XIV do schyłku XV wieku*, in: *Polska dzielnicowa i zjednoczona. Państwo – społeczeństwo – kultura*, ed. A. Gieysztor, Warszawa 1972, p. 334; A. Sochacka, *Jan z Czyżowa namiestnik Władysława Warneńczyka. Kariera rodziny Półkożów w średniowieczu*, Lublin 1993, p. 32; W. Fałkowski, *Jagiellonowie w Europie środkowej*, in: *idem, Pierwsze stulecie Jagiellonów*, Kraków 2017, pp. 6-7. In detail in J. Nikodem, *Jadwiga...*, pp. 329-330; *idem, Witold...*, pp. 176-182.

37 CDP, vol. 6, Königsberg 1861, no. 61.

and long-term cooperation between the two Gediminids.³⁸ In accordance with the tenor of the source, I consider this information to be hearsay and - pointing out the arguments - I state that, by citing it, it was impossible to prove the efforts to crown Vytautas.³⁹ Recently, R. Frost has written that my rejection of this Teutonic information, which I considered to be "rumour" (the Polish translation renders it explicitly as gossip, which may be misleading and not reflect the historian's real intentions) was solely due to the fact that it "did not fit his understanding of the relationship between Vytautas and Jagiełło".⁴⁰ In an unambiguous way, the historian has therefore given the impression that I deliberately over-interpreted the source message. Instead of making this accusation, perhaps one should ask oneself why the pope did not respond to these alleged efforts of Jagiełło. And, more importantly, why he did not give his consent to the coronation. Especially as both Jagiełło and Vytautas allegedly sought it, in addition supporting the crusade, of which Boniface IX was an ardent enthusiast. Let us suppose that the pope might have hesitated in 1398, but early in the following year, after a visit paid by Wojciech Jastrzębiec, he should have fully approved the coronation initiative. In fairness, let me add that R. Frost nevertheless explains why the coronation did not take place: "Vytautas's failure to push his coronation suggests that the episode was a deliberate ploy by the cousins to fend off incorporationist pressure".⁴¹ This is, unfortunately, purely unconvincing conjecture, and rather surprising at that. It turns out, however, that it was only rumour, or (to return to the accusation) much ado about nothing or, to put it mildly, all's well that ends well.

On the other hand, closing the thread of Vytautas' alleged coronation plans, it is enough to mention that if Jagiełło really wanted to make Lithuania a kingdom, thus making it independent from Poland and safeguarding his own dynastic interests, he would have sought the Lithuanian crown for himself. In the future it would fall, along with the Polish crown, to his sons. After all, no one can doubt that he expected sons to be born from his marriage to Jadwiga.

Historiography also claims that the misunderstandings of the crown lords (not Jagiełło, for he allegedly collaborated with his cousin) with Vytautas, about which the sources are silent, were resolved shortly after the Treaty of Salynas,

38 For example, L. Kolankowski, *Dzieje Wielkiego Księstwa...*, p. 75; H. Łowmiański, *Polityka Jagiellonów...*, ed. K. Pietkiewicz, Poznań 1999, pp. 66-67; W. Maciejewska, *Jadwiga...*, p. 108; O. Halecki, *Jadwiga Andegaweńska...*, p. 246.

39 J. Nikodem, *Polska i Litwa...*, pp. 86-88; idem, *Jadwiga...*, p. 334, and the subsequent pages.

40 R. Frost, *The Oxford History...*, p. 90 and footnote 79 (in the Polish version, p. 155 and footnote 79).

41 Ibidem, p. 91 (in the Polish version, p. 157).

as evidenced by a reference preserved in the Crown Register to the royal couple sending Vytautas a book about the Passion of Christ, which was delivered to him by Spytek of Melsztyn and Andrzej, Bishop of Vilnius.⁴² Oskar Halecki claimed outright that the information of the source he used (Vytautas referred to as the *supremi ducis Lithuaniae*) and Długosz's reference recorded in 1399⁴³ prove that even before the Vorskla, Vytautas had become Grand Duke of Lithuania on the recommendation of Jagiełło. The thesis that Vytautas became Grand Duke in 1399 was disproved much earlier by A. Prochaska,⁴⁴ whereas the title from *Liber Passionalis* adds nothing to the case, as it was not used in an official document. Besides, in the last quarter of the 14th century, it often happened that even in official documents, the titles of the Lithuanian princes did not reflect their actual legal legitimacy.

Two issues are directly linked to Vytautas' war expedition in 1399: the prince's alliance with Tokhtamysh and the crusade organised under the auspices of the Holy See. Defeated by Tamerlane and deprived of his power in the Golden Horde, Tokhtamysh probably arrived in Lithuania in 1396⁴⁵ although M. Żdan advocated the year of 1397.⁴⁶ In the jarlig (edict) issued, in exchange for help in re-establishing him in the Golden Horde, he relinquished his rights to the Ruthenian lands then occupied by Lithuania.⁴⁷ While there is no source evidence for this, according to historiography Vytautas' plans were supported by Jagiełło.⁴⁸ If this had been the case, the king would have engaged in an alliance with Tokhtamysh as early as in 1393, especially as he was then still Khan of the Golden Horde. What is more - he himself proposed such an arrangement to the king.⁴⁹ Vytautas' political programme has been covered in Ruthenian chronicles which state that in return for Tokhtamysh's deposition in the Horde, he would help

42 O. Halecki, *Dzieje unii...*, p. 156 and footnote 3; idem, *Jadwiga Andegaweńska...*, pp. 253-255; W. Maciejewska, *Jadwiga...*, p. 108; W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 116.

43 Długosz, lib. 10, pp. 225-226.

44 A. Prochaska, *Przyczynki krytyczne...*, pp. 46-52.

45 See J. Nikodem, *Polska i Litwa...*, p. 70 and footnote 117.

46 M. Żdan, *Stosunki litewsko-tatarskie za czasów Witolda, w. księcia Litwy*, "Ateneum Wileńskie" 7 (1930), 3-4, p. 541.

47 Tokhtamysh's edict reproduced by A. Prochaska, *Z Witoldowych dziejów. Układ Witolda z Tokhtamyszem 1397 r.*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 15 (1912), pp. 260-264.

48 Again, I cite only selected examples: W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 116; J. Krzyżaniakowa, J. Ochmański, *Władysław II Jagiełło...*, p. 170; G. Błaszczuk, *Dzieje stosunków...*, p. 94 (the royal support "is not in the slightest doubt").

49 J. Tyszkiewicz, *Tatarzy na Litwie i w Polsce. Studia z dziejów XIII-XVIII w.*, Warszawa 1989, Annex I, pp. 300-301 (Polish translation). Original in the Uyghur language - Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, parchment 5612. N. Mika was wrong in his *Problematyka tatarska w polityce europejskiej do połowy XV do początku XVI wieku*, Kraków-Warszawa 2020, pp. 57-58, when he wrote that Tokhtamysh then "entered [...] into a deal with the Polish-Lithuanian state".

the prince seize Moscow, *i.e.*, place him on the grand-princely throne of all Rus.⁵⁰ In my opinion, it was only a means to lead Vytautas to full independence from Jagiełło.⁵¹ The latter therefore had not the slightest reason to support his cousin's wartime escapade.

Nor do the Bulls of Boniface IX in any way make the involvement of Poland and Jagiełło in Vytautas' venture plausible, contrary to what historiography has believed.⁵² The issue of launching a crusade against the Turks and Tatars was perhaps a response to Sigismund of Luxembourg's initiative. He, in turn, was very keen to avenge the defeat of Nikopol, but still failed to summon up enthusiasm among his Hungarian subjects.⁵³ In March 1399, the Hungarian king came to Krakow.⁵⁴ According to Józef Skrzypek, he might have persuaded Jagiełło to take part in the crusade, in fact this was also done by the Patriarch of Constantinople.⁵⁵ As Jagiełło could not afford to be accused of negligence in this matter, the Polish response to the popular mood was a request to Boniface IX for permission to launch a crusade, to which the pope agreed.⁵⁶ It is possible that the mission which the Polish monarch entrusted to Sędziwoj of Szubin, the voivode of Kalisz, sending him to Sigismund of Luxembourg in Hungary, concerned precisely this issue, although this is only conjecture.⁵⁷ All this is of secondary importance, however, as Boniface IX's support of the crusade against the Turks and Tartars did not mean that its burden should fall on Poland. After all, the pope sent legates to Poland, Lithuania, Ruthenia, and Wallachia (Peter Wysz), to the lands under the rule of Sigismund of Luxembourg, and to Germany and the states of the Kalmar Union.⁵⁸

We know that the crusade failed to be launched, and that the only armed act that could match the intentions of the Holy See was Vytautas' expedition (an expedition in which Poland officially took no part). This was well

50 See *Letopis' po voskresenskomu spisku*, in: *Polnoje sobranije russkich letopisej*, vol. 8, Sankt Peterburg 1859, p. 72.

51 Details in J. Nikodem, *Polska i Litwa...*, p. 71 and the subsequent pages; idem, *Witold...*, pp. 181-187.

52 For example, A. Prochaska, *Król Władysław Jagiełło*, vol. 1, Kraków 1908, pp. 120-121; idem, *Dzieje Witolda...*, pp. 78-79.

53 E.g., a letter dated March 1399, *Zsigmondkori Oklevélyár*, ed. E. Mályusz, vol. 1, 1387-1399, Budapest 1951, no. 5769; see also J. Skrzypek, *Południowo-wschodnia polityka...*, p. 97.

54 *Najstarsze księgi i rachunki miasta Krakowa od r. 1300-1400*, F. Piekosiński, J. Szujski, Kraków 1878, pp. 260-262.

55 J. Skrzypek, *Polityka południowo-wschodnia...*, pp. 97-98.

56 *Vetera Monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia. Ex tabulariis Vaticanis*, vol. 1, ed. A. Theiner, Romae 1860, no. 1041.

57 *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. 3, Poznań 1879, no. 2005.

58 See J. Drabina, *Kontakty papieżstwa z Polską 1378-1417 w latach wielkiej schizmy zachodniej*, Kraków 1993, p. 32; idem, *Papieżstwo-Polska w latach 1384-1434*, Kraków 2003, p. 36.

presented by O. Halecki in his work, published posthumously. The excellent historian wrote that Jadwiga and Jagiełło approved of the plans for the defence of Christianity, but the king “could not but agree with her [the queen - J.N.] that it was safer for Poland not to get fully involved in any of these plans, even in Vytautas’ risky venture”.⁵⁹ Jagiełło could not have supported Vytautas’ venture not only because of innate caution, but above all because his cousin’s possible victory could have potentially become a threat to his Lithuanian patrimony. At the same time, he could not have prevented it. Firstly, because the expedition took place under the patronage of the Holy See (part of the loan Spytek of Melsztyn took from Mikołaj Boner in March 1399 was earmarked for the expenses of Wojciech Jastrzębiec, Bishop of Poznań, who was going to Lithuania to inform him of the papal support for the crusade⁶⁰). Secondly, even if he wanted to do so, he had no possibility to stop Vytautas. The absence of any trace of the expenses that the Kingdom of Poland would have incurred in supporting the expedition also seems very telling. No such expenditure was recorded by the Krakow city council, yet in 1391, 1393 and 1396 the council co-financed Jagiełło’s expedition against Vladislaus II of Opole. From mid-August to mid-September 1399, the councillors paid the king three times, but the money could not have been used by Vytautas because the battle of the Vorskla had been fought earlier. Another characteristic example: the council never spared money for Teutonic matters.⁶¹ Last but not least, Długosz (a chronicler very often reluctant towards Jagiełło), wrote that the anti-Tatar expedition *unsuccessfully advised against* Vytautas, the king, and the queen.⁶² Although the work of the great chronicler is not a very valuable source for the last quarter of the 14th century, I do not believe that this mention is decisive. That part of historiography, which does not share my opinion on the historian’s knowledge of the times of Jadwiga, is intriguingly silent about this mention.⁶³

These rather detailed remarks have served to outline the background against which we must see the decision taken by Spytek of Melsztyn to participate in the march of Vytautas’ army. There are two possibilities: either the voivode of Krakow did so with the consent of the Polish king, or he made the decision on his own, for some hard-to-explain reason tying his fate/career to Vytautas. In the first case, this would indicate that Jagiełło, contrary to what I claim, supported his cousin’s political plans, and Spytek remained the favourite and

59 O. Halecki, *Jadwiga Andegaweńska...*, pp. 258-259. The historian changed his mind, as he previously believed that Jagiełło supported Vytautas’ plan, idem, *Dzieje unii...*, p. 156.

60 *Najstarsze księgi i rachunki...*, p. 195.

61 M. Starzyński, *Krakowska rada miejska w średniowieczu*, Kraków 2010, pp. 178-181.

62 Długosz, lib. 10, p. 226.

63 For a more detailed account of Jagiełło’s attitude to Vytautas’ expedition, see J. Nikodem, *Polska i Litwa...*, chap. I; idem, *Witold...*, chap. 5.

most trusted man of the Polish monarch. In the other case, which assumes that Vytautas' agenda posed a potential threat to Jagiełło's position in Lithuania, the conclusion would be that Spytek was aiming for some form of independence without feeling overly grateful to Jagiełło for the entire course of his career. Indeed, it would be naïve to think that he was unaware of the differences between the cousins. None of the sources referring to the time before 16 August 1399, when the Battle of Vorskla was fought,⁶⁴ provide information that would help us attempt to unravel the issue. Only later sources, relating to the period after Spytek's death, are of any help. These do not constitute evidence; however, they may serve as circumstantial evidence. In my opinion, they are strong circumstantial evidence.

If Spytek had found himself on the Vorskla River on Jagiełło's orders, even a discretionary order, with his consent, or if the king had not been in any way disturbed by Spytek's decision, Władysław Jagiełło should have behaved much differently than he did. For the *dominus et haeres ducatus Podoliensis et Samboriensis* not only died in battle, but - if Długosz is to be believed⁶⁵ - by his conduct before and during it, he proved that he was a hero, becoming a role model. There is no need to explain how the King should have behaved. Meanwhile, Jagiełło's behaviour seems unusual. Unexpectedly, he acted as if Spytek had never meant anything to him, as if the king had forgotten that he had ever existed. Włodzimierz Dworzaczek explained it as follows: "Jagiełło knew how to reward generously those who served him, but when he ran out of lands to give away, he knew how to take back what he once gave". Apart from that, the deciding factor was "the royal ingratitude towards the orphans of such a deserving father and the intrigues of the lords surrounding Jagiełło, eager for the riches left behind by the fallen governor".⁶⁶ Unfortunately, this image of an almost extremely cynical Jagiełło bears no resemblance to reality. The Polish monarch was certainly not like that. Never mind that Długosz often emphasised the good qualities, purely human features, of Jagiełło because this is just one man's opinion. Even if the chronicler repeated hearsay or even commonly held opinions. It is not so much opinions as facts that testify in the king's favour. On the other hand, the accusation of a tendency to succumb to the whispers of those around him, which was supposed to characterise the simple-minded Jagiełło (the blame for this lies with Długosz, who presented this portrait of the monarch), must be regarded as unfair and unjustified.

⁶⁴ See a very interesting article on the sources devoted to the battle: S.C. Rowell, *Ne visai primintinos kautynės: Ką byloja šaltiniai apie 1399 m. mūšį ties Vorsklos upe*, "Istorijos šaltinių studijos" 1 (2008), pp. 67-89.

⁶⁵ Długosz, lib. 10, pp. 227-229.

⁶⁶ W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, pp. 140, 146.

Jadwiga's husband made a name for himself with his graciousness and a tendency to forgive or let go of past faults. There are numerous, very characteristic, examples of which I mention only a few. In 1386, Krzesław from Kurozwęki and Chodowa, son of Dobiesław, Castellan of Krakow, former Castellan of Nowy Sącz, was transferred to Sandomierz Castellany,⁶⁷ and the following year he became Starost General of Wielkopolska and Starost of Lusk.⁶⁸ It is hard not to concede the point to Robert Bubczyk, who argues that this was "payment for the support of the royal plans for Red Ruthenia" that the king received from the Kurozwęcki family, a debt of gratitude "for the hardships they had incurred in the service of the state".⁶⁹ The imminent loss of both starost dominions may have been due to Krzesław's much lower abilities and creativity than those of his father and brother.⁷⁰ Jagiełło enjoyed considerable favour with his nephew Zygmunt Korybut, who arrived at the royal court shortly after his father's death and remained in Poland until at least 1418.⁷¹ Later, he found himself in Lithuania and became involved with Vytautas, but in the long run the change of guardian did not do him much good. Of course, Korybut's case was not an isolated one - Jagiełło took care of his family's representatives as much as he could (only for lack of space I leave this thread undeveloped).

The king's graciousness or care was also accompanied by a trait much more difficult to practice, namely a propensity to forgive. Whether it resulted from his personality or was developed by Jagiełło, a devout Catholic, is of secondary significance. More importantly, it was not the result of scheming or a desire to keep up appearances. Let me list the best-known examples, inspiring the greatest respect: the king quite quickly forgave the knights accused of illicit relations with his last wife, Sophia of Halshany. Jan Koniecpolski and Piotr and Dobiesław of Szczekociny, who had fled for fear of imprisonment, returned without any consequences as early as in 1428 or 1429.⁷² Jan Hińcza of Rogów was released from prison in 1429,⁷³ Piotr Kurowski and Jan Kraska in the following year.⁷⁴ All this would not be worth mentioning if it were not for the fact

⁶⁷ *Urzednicy malopolscy...*, pp. 236, 16.

⁶⁸ *Urzednicy wielkopolscy XII-XV wieku. Spisy*, prep. M. Bielińska, A. Gąsiorowski, J. Łojko, ed. A. Gąsiorowski, Wrocław etc. 1985, p. 172; Długosz, lib. 10, p. 172 (in 1388).

⁶⁹ R. Bubczyk, *Kariera rodziny Kurozwęckich w XIV wieku. Studium z dziejów powiązań polskiej elity politycznej z Andegawenami*, Warszawa 2002, p. 179.

⁷⁰ J. Nikodem, *Jadwiga...*, p. 215.

⁷¹ J. Grygiel, *Życie i działalność Zygmunta Korybutowicza. Studium z dziejów stosunków polsko-czeskich w pierwszej połowie XV wieku*, Wrocław etc. 1988, pp. 35-37.

⁷² Długosz, lib. 11, p. 227; ZDM, vol. 8, Krakow etc. 1975, no. 2025; KDM, vol. 4, no. 1225.

⁷³ B. Czwojdrak, *Rogowscy herbu Działosza podskarbiowie królewscy. Studium z dziejów możnowładztwa w drugiej połowie XIV i w XV wieku*, Katowice 2002, p. 59.

⁷⁴ *Ibidem*.

that, while still in Jagiełło's reign, some of them continued careers that had been interrupted or just beginning - sometimes excellent ones. Koniecpolski became chancellor, Kurowski became starost of Lublin, and Kraska returned to work in the royal chancellery.⁷⁵ Perhaps even more impressive was the career of Stanisław Ciołek. Working in the chancellery and with excellent prospects, especially as he was very useful and gifted, he wrote an otherwise highly scathing screed on Queen Elżbieta Granowska⁷⁶ for which he was removed from the chancellery and court, only to be restored to favour shortly afterwards, even though Jagiełło, by all accounts, genuinely loved and respected his third wife. On a number of occasions, the king forgave Śvitrigaila who notoriously betrayed him, and for whom Jagiełło had a clear weakness (or perhaps he simply gave him disinterested brotherly love).

All this suggests in no ambiguous terms that, having nothing to punish Spytek for (since he in no way abused the trust of the king, a kind, caring ruler, able and willing to reward) he should have taken special care of the orphaned Spytek family. What was the case? As early as in 1400, the king granted Spytek's Podolia to Śvitrigaila who titled himself *dux Lithuanie, dominus et heres terre Podolie; dux Podolie*.⁷⁷ Perhaps it was temporary; immediately after Spytek's death, Podolia was administered by starost Więclaw (Stanisław), appointed by the king.⁷⁸ Włodzimierz Dworzaczek rightly explained that Jagiełło had to take Podolia from Spytek's widow⁷⁹ "because neither the widow nor the minor sons of the voivode could manage it for the benefit of the state".⁸⁰ In addition, Podolia was purchased from Elżbieta of Melsztyn and the orphans for 5,000 marks of Prague groschen.⁸¹

⁷⁵ *Urzednicy centralni i nadworni Polski XIV-XVIII wieku. Spisy*, prep. K. Chłapowski, S. Ciara, Ł. Kadziela, T. Nowakowski, E. Opaliński, G. Rutkowska, T. Zielińska, ed. A. Gąsiorowski, Kórnik 1992, p. 53; *Urzednicy małopolscy...*, p. 292; J. Krzyżaniakowa, *Kancelaria królewska Władysława Jagiełły. Studium z dziejów kultury politycznej Polski w XV w.*, part 2, *Urzednicy*, Poznań 1979, p. 120. Rogowski was the latest to candidate, after Jagiełło's death.

⁷⁶ See e.g. Z. Kowalska, *Stanisław Ciołek (+1437). Podkanclerzy królewski, biskup poznański, poeta dworski*, Kraków 1993, p. 51.

⁷⁷ J. Kurtyka, *Najstarsze dokumenty dla franciszkanów kamienieckich z lat 1400 i 1402*, in: idem, *Podole w czasach jagiellońskich. Studia i materiały*, ed. M. Wilamowski, preface P. Kurtyka, Kraków 2011, pp. 68-69.

⁷⁸ J. Kurtyka, *Podole w średniowieczu i okresie nowożytnym: obrotowe przedmurze na pograniczu cywilizacji*, in: idem, *Podole...*, p. 120.

⁷⁹ Her dowry: *opido suo Szabno, in terra nostra Cracouiensi sito, et villis et pertinenciis eius et distritu suo Sambor*, see AGZ, vol. 6, no. 6 (corrected document date, see A. Gąsiorowski, *Itinerarium króla Władysława Jagiełły 1386-1434*, second edition, revised and supplemented for publication by A. Gąsiorowski and G. Rutkowska, Warszawa 2015, p. 49 and footnote 62).

⁸⁰ W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, pp. 139-140.

⁸¹ *Starodawne Prawa Polskiego Pomniki*, vol. 2, A.Z. Helcel (henceforth: SPPP), Kraków 1870, no. 1002.

Whether it was a sufficient and fair amount, I do not know; it is probably of less importance. We can also understand that, after Elżbieta agreed to the transaction, the bequest giving Podolia to Spytek and his heirs *irrevocabili* ceased to be valid in the majesty of the law.

The question of whether this harmed Spytek's sons by not otherwise rewarding them some time after they had come of age remains purely rhetorical.

The loss of Podolia did not, unfortunately, end the troubles of the family from Melsztyn. In 1403, Jagiełło allowed the Krakow chamberlain, Piotr Szafraniec, to buy the castle and 10 Rabsztyn villages. Although this never happened, it did not bode well.⁸² In the following year, the king took the castle and the estate of Krzepice from Spytek's family for 1,000 marks and granted them to Hinczka of Roszkowice, castellan of Rozprza.⁸³ Hinczka was a former protégé of Spytek, which, of course, could have been of no consequence, but could theoretically have left the family from Melsztyn even more confused. The monographer of the Leliwa coat of arms family of Tarnów linked the Krzepice affair with the remarriage of Elżbieta of Melsztyn because Jan, Duke of Ziębice, was politically connected with the Luxemburgs.⁸⁴ But why did it affect (rather severely) Spytek's children? After a gap of several years, in 1410, Jagiełło allowed marshal Zbigniew of Brzezie to buy the town and castle of Lanckorona, together with 16 villages, for 1,000 marks.⁸⁵ Soon afterwards the family from Melsztyn lost Sambir land, which passed into the hands of the Odrowąż family from Sprowa. This was "probably the fundamental source of the younger son's dislike of the king and his advisors", wrote W. Dworzaczek. This may also be the origin of the distance with which Spytko's grandson would one day refer to king Casimir.⁸⁶ The wrongs of both Spytek's sons (and they were evident wrongs) were not compensated for by their participation in the royal retinue heading for a meeting with Sigismund of Luxemburg in 1423 in Kežmarok. Jan of Melsztyn left for Hungary after 1424, entering the service of Sigismund, and died in Buda in 1428 or 1429.⁸⁷ Spytek's younger son received little consolation from the royal verdict in his protracted court dispute with his sister-in-law over the custody of his niece.⁸⁸ After all, it was about family feuds. The order to return his property, addressed to Piotr Odrowąż, Podolia voivode and Sambir starost, was not

82 KDM, vol. 4, no. 1071. See J. Sperka, *Szafraniec herbu Stary Koń. Z dziejów kariery i awansu w późnośredniowiecznej Polsce*, Katowice 2001, p. 75.

83 *Teki Naruszewicza*, vol. 10, Czartoryski Library in Kraków, no. 76. See *Urzednicy tęczycy, sieradscy i wieluńscy XIII-XV wieku*, ed. J. Bieniak, A. Szymczakowa, A. Gąsiorowski, Wrocław etc. 1985, p. 97; B. Czwojdrak, *Rogowscy...*, footnote 55, p. 46.

84 W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, pp. 57-58.

85 SPPP, vol. 2, no. 1443, 1782; ZDM, vol. 6, no. 1742.

86 W. Dworzaczek, *Leliwici Tarnowscy...*, p. 141.

87 Ibidem, p. 145.

88 SPPP, vol. 2, no. 2255, 2347.

issued until 1436 by Władysław III, *i.e.* those who had custody of the underage king.⁸⁹ Spytek's younger son received his first office (castellan of Bytom) only after Jagiełło's death⁹⁰ and failed to warm to the dynasty for the rest of his life.

Based on the presented material, it is truly impossible to believe that if Spytek of Melsztyn had supported the alleged joint political plan of Jagiełło and Vytautas related to Tokhtamysh, the king would not have taken care of his sons. On the other hand, he certainly would not have harmed them in such an obvious way. Especially as Spytek not only fought at the Vorskla but lost his life there. It is also unbelievable that Jagiełło would not have demanded the same from Vytautas, who (according to the historiography) pursued the royal policy or co-developed it, if only he had noticed that his cousin had forgotten about the fate of Spytek's sons.

Antoni Prochaska, who knew the times of Jagiełło like no one else, wrote that the king, "otherwise gentle and humane", was sometimes "impulsive and harsh [...] in punishing especially disobedience or treason". The cases in point are the landed dignitaries of Dobrzyń and their relations with the Teutonic Knights; the punishment of Vladislaus II of Opole for felony, the punishment of Jan, bishop of Włocławek, the 'persecution' of Siemowit IV, Duke of Masovia, if the memorandum of his sons is to be believed. The king "had to put a bar to aspirations which he considered pernicious, to punish for sins".⁹¹ The examples pointed out by the eminent researcher can be topped with another one, very significant and similar to the Spytek case. When Zugmunt Korybut returned from Bohemia after his first expedition (an expedition that took place without Jagiełło's consent⁹²), he asked the king to lease the Dobrzyń land to him, but the king sent the request to a general convention in Warta for a decision. There, the prince's request was turned down.⁹³ It goes without saying that this decision was simply demanded by the king from the congress. He did not forget and did not forgive Korybut's lack of loyalty, as evidenced by a letter written by the prince to Vytautas during his second stay in Bohemia.⁹⁴ Therefore, if Jagiełło could not, and did not, want to forgive disobedience, unfaithfulness, betrayal (any of the terms may be appropriate here) to his nephew, all the more could he do so in the case of Spytek of Melsztyn, who was merely a favourite and a very trusted collaborator. Apparently, the king was able to forgive a violation of his male pride or his most personal feelings, but not his dynastic interests.

89 AGZ, vol. 6, no. 17.

90 *Urzednicy malopolscy...*, p. 41.

91 A. Prochaska, *Król Władysław Jagiełło...*, vol. 2, pp. 348-349.

92 J. Nikodem, *Polska i Litwa...*, chap. IV.

93 Długosz, lib. 11, pp. 192-193. The Warta convention of 1423 is not confirmed in other sources, but is accepted in historiography.

94 CEV, no. 1218.

Having said all that, it is impossible to decide why Spytek of Melsztyn became so deeply involved with Vytautas that he did not hesitate to put his relations with the king at stake. Whatever we write on this subject, it will be a matter of conjecture detached from the sources, perhaps more or less detrimental to Spytek. However, I am convinced (although, as I have mentioned, I have only provided what I think is strong circumstantial evidence) that Władysław Jagiełło at least perceived the conduct of the "lord and heir" of Podolia and Sambir land as an act of disloyalty and ingratitude. Unable to show this to Spytek, he apparently showed it to his family. On the other hand, if we are to believe the words of the mentioned document by Władysław III of 1436, the younger son of Spytek was given back his estates in accordance with the act of the last will of Władysław Jagiełło.⁹⁵ Either this was the case, in which case Olgierd's son would have shown remorse while standing over the grave, or, which had nothing to do with Jagiełło anymore, there was a clever attempt, by appealing to emotions, to tie Spytek to the dynasty and the existing political order.

ABSTRACT

In an attempt to explain the reason for Spytek of Melsztyn's participation in Vytautas' 1399 expedition, the author used indirect evidence (others do not exist). He assumed that a chain of circumstantial evidence considered in conjunction with each other would lead to an irresistible conclusion. Plotting the background of the political situation at the time, he concluded that Spytek sought to achieve some form of independence from King Władysław Jagiełło. In addition, the author believes that this interpretation is also supported by the king's attitude towards Spytek's family after his death.

Keywords: Spytek of Melsztyn, Władysław Jagiełło, Vytautas, Vorskla, Podolia

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95 AGZ, vol. 6, nr 17: *in ultima sua voluntate*.

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THE KING, THE NOBILITY, AND THEIR REPRESENTATION. LAND DEPUTIES IN POLAND UNTIL THE YEAR 1453



I

Critical research concerning the origins of Polish parliamentarism in the late Middle Ages, which has been ongoing since the end of the 19th century, has led to the situation that the image of this historiographical problem has already been mostly outlined. A particularly good summary of the output of legal historians and historian-medievalists in this field has recently been made by Sławomir Gawlas, which frees us from the need to discuss the main research trends in greater detail.¹ However, it is worth citing Waław Uruszczak's recent research, successfully promoting a new date of holding the model first bicameral parliament/sejm (with the participation of land deputies), which was shown as early as 1468, and not as late as 1493, as suggested by earlier scholars of this issue.² Wojciech Fałkowski's work concerning some of the general

1 S. Gawlas, *Początki sejmu polskiego: problemy i dyskusje*, in: *Systemy reprezentacji i parlamentaryzm w Europie Środkowej w rozwoju historycznym*, ed. A. Barciak, Katowice-Zabrze 2016, pp. 127-140.

2 W. Uruszczak, *Poselstwo sejmowe w dawnej Polsce. Postanieniec, mandatariusz, poseł, narodu*, "Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne" 61 (2009), pp. 49-52; idem, *Poselstwo sejmowe w dawnej Polsce*, in: *Drogi i bezdroża nauk historyczno-prawnych*, ed. M. Małeckie, Bielsko-Biała 2010, pp. 49-52; idem, *Najstarszy sejm walny koronny „dwuizbowy” w Piotrkowie w 1468 roku*, in: *Narodziny Rzeczypospolitej. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza i czasów wczesnonowożytnych*, vol. 2, ed. W. Bukowski, T. Jurek, Kraków 2012, pp. 1033-1056; idem, *Czy rok 1468 można uznać za początek polskiego parlamentaryzmu i z jakich powodów?*, "Przegląd Sejmowy" (2018), 1 [144], pp. 194-208; idem, *Pierwszy sejm walny*

assemblies/sejms from the years of the reign of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk and the sejms from the period of King Władysław III's absence from Poland and the interregnum after his death 1440-1447 constitute an important account. It should be emphasised that these are multi-faceted analyses of the political background and themes of the assemblies, the parliamentary ceremonial, as well as the key players in the proceedings. Also noteworthy are the studies of the Warsaw researcher, in which he strongly emphasised the fact of the formation of late medieval Polish parliamentarism during the power play between the monarch, individual groups of magnates, as well as the ordinary nobility, and the evolutionary nature of this process.³ We also owe a highly interesting comparative image of the formation of parliamentarism in Central Europe (Poland, Hungary, the Holy Roman Empire) to the German researcher Julia Dücker/Burkhardt.⁴ The beginnings of the pro-

koronny "dwuizbowy" od 9 do 31 października 1468 roku, in: *Sejm Królestwa Polskiego i Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów a europejskie reprezentacje stanowe*, ed. D. Kupisz, W. Uruszczak, Warszawa 2019, pp. 61-81.

3 W. Fałkowski, *Rok trzech sejmów*, in: "Aetas media, aetas moderna". *Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Henrykowi Samsonowiczowi w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, ed. H. Manikowska, A. Bartoszewicz, W. Fałkowski, Warszawa 2000, pp. 425-438 (reproduced without change, and under the same title, in: idem, *Pierwsze stulecie Jagiellonów*, ed. P. Derecki, Kraków 2017, pp. 281-295); idem, *Pierwszy sejm Kazimierza Jagiellończyka*, in: *Świat pogranicza*, ed. M. Nagielski, A. Rachuba, S. Górzyński, Warszawa 2003, pp. 80-88 (reproduced without change, and under the same title, in: idem, *Pierwsze stulecie...*, pp. 231-241); idem, *Możnowładztwo polskie wobec króla. Zabiegi i działania polityczne wokół monarchii w XV stuleciu*, in: *Kolory i struktury średniowiecza*, ed. W. Fałkowski, Warszawa 2004, pp. 9-26 (reproduced without change and under the same title in: idem, *Pierwsze stulecie...*, pp. 39-59); idem, *Sejmy bez króla (1440-1446)*, in: "Historia vero testis temporum". *Księga jubileuszowa poświęcona profesorowi Krzysztofowi Baczkowskiemu w 70. rocznicę urodzin*, ed. J. Smółucha, A. Waško, T. Graff, P.F. Nowakowski, Kraków 2008, pp. 235-255 (reproduced without change and under the same title in: idem, *Pierwsze stulecie...*, pp. 207-229); idem, *Proces powstawania polskiego sejmiku. Rzecz o kulturze politycznej pierwszych Jagiellonów*, in: *Sejm Królestwa Polskiego...*, pp. 28-38.

4 J. Dücker, *Reichsversammlungen im Spätmittelalter. Politische Willensbildung in Polen, Ungarn und Deutschland*, Ostfildern 2011; eadem, "Una gens, unum regnum, unus populus?". „Grenzüberschreitende“ Politik im spätmittelalterlichen Polen und Ungarn, in: *Faktum und Konstrukt. Politische Grenzziehungen im Mittelalter: Verdichtung-Symbolisierung-Reflexion*, ed. N. Bock, G. Jostkleigrewe, B. Walter. Münster 2011, pp. 237-257; eadem, "Pro communi reipublicae bono". König und Reich im jagiellonischen Polen um 1500, in: *Between Worlds: The Age of the Jagiellonians*, ed. F. Ardelean, Ch. Nicholson, J. Preiser-Kapeller, Frankfurt 2013, pp. 61-78; J. Burkhardt, *Procedure, Rules and Meaning of Political Assemblies in Late Medieval Central Europe*, "Parliaments, Estates and Representation" 35 (2015), 2, pp. 153-170; eadem, *Frictions and Fictions of Community: Structures and Representations of Power in Central Europe, c. 1350-1500*, "The Medieval History Journal" 19 (2016), 2, pp. 191-228; eadem, *Negotiating Realms: Political Representation in Late Medieval Poland, Hungary, and the Holy Roman Empire*, in: *Medieval East Central Europe in a Comparative Perspective: From Frontier Zones to Lands in Focus*, ed. G. Jaritz, K. Szende, Oxford 2016, pp. 62-77; eadem, *Vom Hoftag zur Reichsversammlung. Formen, Verfahren und Bedeutung politischer Versammlungen in Mitteleuropa*, in: *Stand und Perspektiven der Sozial- und Verfassungsgeschichte zum römisch-deutschen Reich. Der*

cess of forming Polish parliamentarism were also described in an interesting way by Dariusz Wróbel, who presented in detail the issues of the general and provincial assemblies from 1382-1385.⁵

One of the fundamental problems concerning the process of creating, developing, and consolidating Polish parliamentarism in the late Middle Ages is the scarcity of primary sources, especially regarding its initial phase. This has been already emphasised by previous researchers of the issue. At this point we will quote only Stanisław Russocki's opinion: "Above all, the extant primary source base is significantly sparse".⁶ Therefore, each new primary source introduced into scholarly circulation, or interpreted in a different manner, undoubtedly brings new content to the discussion of parliamentary issues in late medieval Poland. Thus, in this text we intend to draw attention to a handful of such information, underused in research on the issues mentioned, or interpreted without sufficiently deep source reflection. In doing so, our narrative will focus on primary sources concerning the shape of the nobility's parliamentary representation (representing land deputies) in the last years of the reign of King Władysław Jagiełło (d. 1434), during the guardianship rule resulting from Władysław III being of minor age (1434-1438) and at the beginning of the reign of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk.

* * *

A so far unknown primary source concerning the formation of the representation of the noble state is a report by the Teutonic informant Nicholas Steinchen, operating on the borderland between Dobrzyń land, Mazovia, and the Chełmno land, addressed to the commander of Brodnica, Johann von Gor, which was created in early 1432.⁷ The numerous matters raised

Forschungseinfluss Peter Moraws auf die deutsche Mediävistik, ed. Ch. Reinle, Affalterbach 2016, pp. 111-132; eadem, *Spätmittelalterliche Reichsversammlungen in Polen und Deutschland*, in: *Frühneuzeitliche Reiche in Europa / Empires in Early Modern Europe. Das Heilige Römische Reich und Polen-Litauen im Vergleich*, ed. T. Gromelski, Ch. Preusse, A. Ross, D. Tricoire, Wiesbaden 2016, pp. 27-67; eadem, *Assemblies in the Holy Roman Empire and the East Central European Kingdoms. A Comparative Essay on Political Participation and Representation*, in: *Rulership in Medieval East Central Europe. Power, Ritual and Legitimacy in Bohemia, Hungary and Poland*, ed. D. Zupka, G. Vercamer, Leiden-Boston 2022, pp. 198-214.

5 D. Wróbel, *U zarania polskiego parlamentaryzmu – aktywność protoparlamentarna w okresie bezkrólewia 1382–1384, "Przegląd Sejmowy" (2021), 5 [166], pp. 162-182.*

6 S. Russocki, *Narodziny polskiego parlamentaryzmu w perspektywie porównawczej*, in: *Spółczesność obywatelska i jego reprezentacja (1493-1993)*, ed. J. Bardach, W. Sudnik, Warszawa 1995, p. 55.

7 S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło do dziejów kształtowania się polskiej reprezentacji stanowej w późnym średniowieczu. Raport krzyżackiego informatora Mikołaja Steinchena z początku grudnia 1432 roku*, "Roczniki Historyczne" 86 (2020), pp. 136, 148-149.

by the informant in this source included information concerning the arrival in Bobrowniki in the Dobrzyń land of the voivode of Brześć Kujawski, Jan of Licheń, who, on behalf of King Władysław Jagiełło, called the nobility of Dobrzyń land to a general assembly/sejm in Cracow on 25 December 1432. However, the monarch did not summon all representatives of the Polish noble state to this general assembly, but only the “elders” from each “coat of arms” (*i.e.*, knightly/noble clans) from each district-land (*daz von ittlichem schilde uß ittlichem gebythe tzwene dy eldesten*).⁸

The general assembly/sejm in question did indeed take place in Cracow, at the turn of 1432 and 1433, during the stay of King Władysław Jagiełło in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland, *i.e.*, between 25 December 1432 and 13 January 1433.⁹ In Jan Długosz's *Annales*¹⁰ it was presented in a very restrained manner, even though highly important matters were dealt with during it. This is because it was not solely, as the aforementioned chronicler wished, about the ways in which the ongoing war with the Teutonic Knights had been conducted since 1431. Domestic matters were also addressed, as evidenced by the King's issuing of the so-called Privilege of Cracow to the Polish nobility on 9 January 1433, which confirmed the Privilege of Jedlnia of 1430. In return, the nobility once again pledged to the king to elect one of his sons from his marriage to Queen Sophia of Holszany as king of Poland after his death. A little earlier, on 3 January 1433, during the general assembly/sejm of Cracow, relations between Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania were readjusted by confirming the principles of the Grodno Union of 1432. As a result of this, two royal documents were issued, one of which contained a list of Polish guarantors of the union provisions, consisting of numerous members of the royal council and less important land officials.¹¹

8 Ibidem, pp. 138, 148.

9 A. Gąsiorowski, *Itinerarium króla Władysława Jagiełły 1386-1434*, Warszawa 2015², p. 122.

10 Joannis Dlugossii *Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae* (henceforth: Długosz), lib. 11-12, Varsaviae 2001, p. 79.

11 S. Roman, *Konflikt prawno-polityczny 1425-1430 roku a przywilej brzeski*, “Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne” 14 (1962), pp. 89-90; J. Kurtyka, *Tęczyńscy. Studium z dziejów polskiej elity możnowładczej w średniowieczu*, Kraków 1997, pp. 298-299; J. Sperka, *Szafrancowie herbu Stary Koń. Z dziejów kariery i awansu w późnośredniowiecznej Polsce*, Katowice 2001, pp. 222-230; Z. Wilk-Woś, *Władysław z Oporowa*, “Studia Claromontana” 21 (2003), pp. 269-270; G. Błaszczyk, *Dzieje stosunków polsko-litewskich*, vol. 2, part 1, Poznań 2007, pp. 693-694; S.V. Polekhov, *Nasledniki Vitovta. Dinasticheskaya voïna v Velikom knyazhestve Litovskom v 30-ye gody XV veka*, Moskva 2015, pp. 325-326; W. Zawitkowska, *Walka polityczno-prawna o następstwo tronu po Władysławie Jagielle w latach 1424-1434*, Rzeszów 2015, pp. 301-305; A. Sochacka, *Jan z Czyżowa namiestnik Władysława Warneńczyka. Kariera rodziny Półkozów w średniowieczu*, Oświęcim 2016², pp. 94-95; D. Wróbel, *Elity polityczne Królestwa Polskiego wobec problemu krzyżackiego w czasach Władysława Jagiełły*, Lublin 2016, pp. 473-474.

The information about the Cracow general assembly/sejm, which actually took place and started on the date given by Steinchen, positively verifies the reliability of his account. That is because this primary source, as a spy report, must be subjected to a critique of credibility, like any narrative source. Therefore, it seems that the information about calling for this assembly not all the nobility, but only its representation in the form of "elders" from each knightly/noble clan from each district, which should be understood as an independent land (which was Dobrzyń land) or voivodeship (in our case Kujawy Brzeskie), or an entire district of the 15th century Polish Kingdom (such as Greater Poland, consisting of two voivodeships: Poznań and Kalisz) is also true. Let us also add that the Teutonic informant had no reason to distort the content of precisely this part of his report. Moreover, as a person active, among other things, in the Dobrzyń land, and familiar with the representatives of the noble elite there, he should be considered well informed in terms of the events taking place in that territory and at a time not distant from creating his report. Other information included in Steinchen's account should also be considered as being, on the whole, true.¹²

The possibility of appointing a noble clan-territorial representation of the nobility at the Cracow general assembly of 1432/1433 is argued by yet another primary source. However, its dating and reliability are controversial. Therefore, it is necessary to take a closer look at this information. That is because *Liber cancellariae* by Stanisław Ciołek includes the text of a letter from King Władysław Jagiełło to Grand Duke Vytautas of Lithuania, issued in Nowe Miasto Korczyn, which is devoid of a day or year date. In it, Jagiełło reported to his cousin that he planned to call for the "lords" (*domini*) and communities (*communitates*) of the nobility from Lesser Poland and Ruś to Nowe Miasto Korczyn, in order to determine how to combat the Hussite heresy. However, this matter was delayed due to the absence of the "lords" and noble communities of Greater Poland. Resultantly, the king sent two *barones* from Greater Poland to them, who were to obtain an opinion from the local nobility in their land. After their return, the king intended to call for the "lords" and two from each family from Lesser Poland and Ruthenia to Wiślica on 11 November 1423, so that there, in his presence and with his participation (*nobiscum*), the final resolutions to combat heresy would be made.¹³ This letter undoubtedly refers to the consultations with the nobility

12 S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło...*, pp. 135-138.

13 *Liber cancellariae* Stanisłai Ciołek. Ein Formelbuch der polnischen Königskanzlei aus der Zeit der husitischen Bewegung, I, ed. J. Caro, Wien 1871, no. 8 (*Verum, quia prefate incriptionis conclusio et diffinitio propter absenciam dominorum et communitatis Maioris Polonie est dilata, ad quorum sciendam et inquirendam voluntatem vadunt duo de baronibus harum partium, quorum voluntate scita et obtenta prefati domini et duo de qualibet domo seu clenodio in Vislicis super festum sancti Martini iterum debent convenire predictam inscriptionem seu mutuam obligationem diffinituri nobiscum*).

that preceded Jagiello's issuing of the so-called Wieluń Edict (9 April 1424), directed against the Hussites.¹⁴ Therefore, it can be assumed that the letter of interest was written in 1423, as the publisher of the source had already surmised.¹⁵ More precisely, between 24 and 17 June or 28-29 August 1423, when Władysław Jagiełło certainly stayed in Nowe Miasto Korczyn.¹⁶ The historical context and the fact that the king did indeed stay in the town in 1423 thus speak in favour of the authenticity of the analysed message. However, doubts remain concerning its authenticity. After all, the text of the letter survived in the *Liber cancellariae* by Stanisław Ciołek, into which very often fictitious sources were incorporated as models for documents and letters in chancelleries.¹⁷ Maria Koczerska also argued for the fictional character of King Władysław's letter to the Grand Duke, pointing out that Jagiełło certainly did not stay in Wiślica in 1423 around 11 November, where the *nobiscum* was supposed to have passed anti-Hussite resolutions.¹⁸ However, on the other hand, it is impossible not to notice that the King's letter to the Grand Duke may have concerned plans which were ultimately not conducted for unknown reasons. This would dismiss most of the allegations raised above as to the credibility of this message. However, we cannot solve this problem here; it requires further research.

In view of the doubts concerning the credibility of the letter discussed above, Nicholas Steinchen's report dated early December 1432 remains the only completely reliable primary source providing information on the functioning of noble clan parliamentary representation of the nobility in Poland during the last period of Władysław Jagiełło's reign. Even though the authenticity of Jagiello's letter from Stanisław Ciołek's *Liber cancellariae* may be doubted, it confirms that this form was known at the time, which further strengthens the reliability of Steinchen's account.

There are also primary sources which allow us to hypothesise in what shape the representation of the *communitas Regni Poloniae* appeared at

14 P. Kras, *Husyci w piętnastowiecznej Polsce*, Lublin 1998, p. 234.

15 *Liber cancellariae* Stanisłai Ciołek, I, no. 8, p. 36 (subnote), his dating was accepted and followed by: R. Grodecki, *Konfederacje w Polsce w XV w.*, "Sprawozdania Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności" 52 (1951), p. 883; M. Koczerska, *Composicio clenodiorum – fikcyjna konfederacja*, in: *Parlament, prawo, ludzie. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Juliuszowi Bardachowi w sześćdziesięciolecie pracy twórczej*, ed. K. Iwanicka, M. Skowronek, K. Stembrowicz, Warszawa 1996, p. 108; S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło...*, pp. 140-141.

16 A. Gąsiorowski, *Itinerarium...*, pp. 99-100.

17 M. Koczerska, *Rzeczywistość i fikcja w formularzach polskich XV w.*, in: *Literatura i kultura polskiego średniowiecza. Człowiek wobec świata znaków i symboli*, ed. P. Buchwald-Pelcowa, J. Pelc, Warszawa 1995, pp. 23-38.

18 M. Koczerska, *Composicio clenodiorum...*, p. 108, subnote. 28; see also: A. Gąsiorowski, *Itinerarium...*, p. 100.

the general assembly in Cracow of December/January 1432/1433, as well as how, and in what fora, the election of the noble representatives of the *duo de qualibet domo seu clenodio* took place.

Two documents of the nobility of the Kujawy Brzeskie and Dobrzyń lands, issued on 14 April 1433 at a land assembly/sejmik in Brześć Kujawski and on 25 January 1434 at a land assembly/sejmik in Dobrzyń, provide us with a clue concerning the shape of this representation. Both of these documents, written according to the same form/template, concerned the approval of the succession to the throne in Poland after Jagiełło's death of one of his sons. The bishop of Włocławek, the voivode of Brześć Kujawski, the castellans of Kujawy Południowe, the vast majority of middle and lower officials there, and the *duo de quolibet clenodio terrigenarum Cuyaviensium*, a total of 46 nobles not holding office, appeared as guarantors in the Brześć document.¹⁹ It was similar in the case of the Dobrzyń document, where, however, the bishop is missing and the list of land officials begins with the castellan of Dobrzyń, as the office of voivode did not appear in the Dobrzyń land hierarchy. The number of *duorum de quolibet clenodio terrigenarum Dobrinensium* was 53 representatives of local nobility not holding office.²⁰

Taking into account the presence of noble clan and territorial representation, in the form required by the King at the Cracow general assembly of 1432/1433, and the substance of the nobility's obligation concerning the succession to the throne, both documents (of 1433 and 1434) should be considered a logical consequence of the decisions made at the general assembly/sejm of Cracow, *i.e.*, the obligation of the entire noble state to accept one of Jagiełło's sons as King and the issuing of a state privilege by the King in return.²¹ This makes it possible to further consider it likely that the representation of the nobility of Kujawy Brzeskie and the Dobrzyń lands came to the general assembly of Cracow in a similar form: that is, they were land officials and several dozen representatives of nobility not holding office. Let us add that such a form fits the pattern presented by Jagiełło's letter to Vytautas from Stanisław Ciołek's *Liber cancellariae*, which mentions summoning *dominorum* (*i.e.*, land officials) *et duorum de qualibet domo seu clenodio* from the Lesser Poland and Ruthenian lands of the Kingdom of Poland, to Wiślica.²² The participation of such a large representation of the nobility at the general assembly of Cracow is not reflected either in the document

19 *Codex diplomaticus Poloniae*, vol. 2, part 2, ed. L. Ryszczewski, A. Muczkowski, Warszawa 1852, no. 576.

20 *Ibidem*, no. 578.

21 Concerning the efforts of Władysław Jagiełło to recognise the succession of his sons, see: W. Zawitkowska, *Walka polityczno-prawna o następstwo tronu po Władysławie Jagielle w latach 1424-1434*, Rzeszów 2015.

22 *Liber cancellariae Stanislai Ciołek*, I, no. 8.

of the Cracow privilege or in the document confirming the Grodno union, which included as guarantors only representatives of the royal council (clergy and laymen), a considerable number of middle officials (judges, chamberlains, and ensigns), but only three lower ranking ones (two sub-judges and a cup-bearer) and no one from among the nobility who did not hold an office.²³ However, both lists of guarantors undoubtedly omit the representation of the rank-and-file nobility without office and the vast majority of lower officials presumably present during the general assembly/sejm in Cracow.

It seems that the representatives of the individual noble *communitas* in noble clan form delegated to the general assembly of Cracow were elected from among their participants at the land assemblies/sejmiki held in late November or early December 1432. This is indicated by the examples of the Dobrzyń Lands, and Kujawy. The deputy with royal command, who was the voivode of Brześć Kujawski, Jan of Licheń, arrived at the land assembly/sejmik in Bobrowniki probably at the end of November 1432, and before that probably announced the royal will at the land assembly/sejmik in Brześć Kujawski.²⁴ That is because there seemed to be no time to organise separate assemblies of the knightly clans of a particular land, since the general assembly/sejm was already due to begin on 25 December of that year, and everyone called to it needed some time to prepare for the trip and set off on a journey that could not have been easy in the harsh winter conditions.

II

Shortly after the events described here, which involved the representation of the nobility in clan and territorial form, but already after the death of King Władysław Jagiełło (d. 1 June 1434), we have source confirmation of the institution of "land deputies" (*nuncii terrarum*). Indeed, the document concerning the settlement of the managers of the state mint of 14 October 1435 issued in Cracow, lists by name the members of the commission conducting this action, whose list is summarised in the following form: *consiliarii tutoresque nostri et nuncii terrarium*.²⁵ In this case it is important that the issuing of the aforementioned source undoubtedly took place during a general assembly/sejm (*convencio generalis*), the session of which in the capital of the Kingdom of Poland is confirmed by a primary source dated

²³ *Codex epistolaris saeculi decimi quinti*, vol. 2, ed. A. Lewicki, Kraków 1891, no. 212; *Akta unii Polski z Litwą 1385-1791*, ed. S. Kutrzeba, W. Semkowicz, Kraków 1932, no. 58.

²⁴ S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło...*, p. 136.

²⁵ *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich*, vol. 8, ed. I. Sułkowska-Kuras, S. Kuraś, Wrocław 1975, no. 2182.

7 October.²⁶ This general assembly/sejm was not recorded in his work by Jan Długosz, nor was it recorded by Franciszek Piekosiński.²⁷

The general assembly/sejm of Cracow of October 1435 took place during a specific period in the history of the Polish Kingdom. After the death of Władysław Jagiełło, his underage son Władysław III was crowned king. Until he reached adulthood (which was in December 1438), guardianship rule was exercised by the royal council with the help of subordinate tutors (*tutores*) who had the right to oversee royal estates in specific lands of the kingdom.²⁸

The author's previous considerations made it possible to put forward the hypothesis that the land deputies of the document of interest were most probably: chamberlain of Inowrocław, Stanisław Szczkowski; ensign of Sandomierz, Mikołaj Słaka of Ławszów; ensign of Inowrocław, Mikołaj Kościelecki of Skepe; judge of Poznań, Abraham of Zbąszyń; pantler of Kalisz, Zygmunt of Margonin; deputy pantler of Łęczyca, Klemens of Bechcice; Maciej Borek of Osieczna (at that time the only starosta [royal governor] of Wschowa, later castellan of Nakło); and Wojciech Górski (later pantler of Poznań). This is because the other members of the council were either members of the royal council or tutors.²⁹

The fact of the attendance of land deputies at the sejm of Cracow in October 1435 was previously noted by W. Uruszczak. However, he believed that they were "deputies" only in the sense of being delegated from among the nobility present at the general assembly/sejm from the various lands of the Kingdom, to participate on their behalf in controlling the state mint.³⁰

However it seems that in the context of the functioning of the nobility's parliamentary representation for the general assembly/sejm of Cracow of 1432/1433, the land deputies were elected on a noble clan-territorial basis; in the case of the *nunciorum terrarum* of the general assembly/sejm of Cracow

26 *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z archiwum tzw. bernardyńskiego we Lwowie*, vol. 5, ed. O. Pieruski, X. Liske, Lwów 1875, no. 64 (*in presenti convencione generali Cracouiensi*); S.A. Sroka, W. Zawitkowska, *Itinerarium króla Władysława III 1434-1444*, Warszawa 2017, p. 41.

27 F. Piekosiński, *Wiece, sejniki, sejmy i przywileje ziemskie w Polsce wieków średnich*, Kraków 1900, p. 47.

28 S. Kutrzeba, *Urzędy koronne i dworskie*, "Przewodnik Naukowy i Literacki" 31 (1903), pp. 1154-1156; W. Sobociński, *Historia rządów opiekuńczych w Polsce*, "Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne" 2 (1949), pp. 291-296, 335; J. Kurtyka, *Tęczyński...*, pp. 302-314; J. Sperka, *Szafrancowie...*, pp. 242-259; A. Sochacka, *Jan z Czyżowa...*, pp. 98-111.

29 S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródła do dziejów polsko-krzyżackich rokowań w Brześciu Kujawskim w grudniu 1435 r.*, "Ziemia Kujawska" 16 (2003), pp. 86-87; idem, *Szlacheckie elity urzędnicze we wspólnocie terytorialnej w późnym średniowieczu (na przykładzie śródkowopolskim)*, in: *Człowiek w średniowieczu. Między historią a biologią*, ed. A. Szymczakowa, Łódź 2009, pp. 115-117.

30 W. Uruszczak, *Poselstwo sejmowe w dawnej Polsce. Poślaniec...*, pp. 51-52; idem, *Pierwszy sejm walny koronny...*, pp. 78-79.

of 1435, it can also be assumed that they were representatives of their lands at that entire assembly, and not merely controllers of the state mint. They were probably delegated to this activity as land deputies only by the sejm. Selecting the land deputies for the general assembly/sejm of Cracow of 1435 was most likely modelled on an earlier case of sending a representation of the nobility to the general assembly of Cracow of December 1432/January 1433. Although the noble clan-territorial principle was abandoned in 1435, and land officials holding lower and middle offices could have been land deputies, as shown above.

The fact that the above-mentioned individuals may have been elected by the particularistic assemblies of the nobility of their lands (sejmiks) as land deputies is evidenced by their biographies. That is because all appear to have enjoyed appropriate local authority that justified the likelihood of selection. Almost all of them, as mentioned above, held land offices, and one was a starosta (royal governor), nominated for a castellan office a few years later (Maciej Borek of Osieczna). Only Wojciech Górski was not an office holder in 1435 (although he was soon granted the office of pantler of Poznań). It should also be added that quite a number of our *nuncii* belonged to family circles whose elevated position in the noble territorial communities was not episodic (for example, Mikołaj Kościelecki of Skępe was the son of a voivode and himself died as a voivode in 1480). The primary sources documenting their activities also allow the conclusion that they were active individuals in their homelands. Some of the *nuncii* from the general assembly/sejm of Cracow of 1435 were active previously or subsequently in the national forum or in the royal service (or possibly in the grand ducal service, such as Mikołaj Słaka of Ławszów, scribe, secretary, and advisor to Grand Duke Vytautas). It should also be added that in 1435, four of the deputies (Mikołaj Słaka of Ławszów, Zygmunt of Margonin, Klemens of Bechcice, and Wojciech Górski) were certainly accolades (*milites strennui*). It is also quite likely that Mikołaj Kościelecki, who was first recorded in the sources with the appropriate title in early 1436, was also an accolade at that time. The title of accolade conferred additional authority on its holder, which further supports our hypothesis of a significant probability of the above-mentioned persons being elected as land deputies at land assemblies/sejmiks.³¹

31 See biographical literature devoted to these figures: Stanisław Szczkowski (J. Bieniak, *Stanisław ze Szczkowa*, in: *Polski Słownik Biograficzny* (henceforth: PSB) 42 (2003-2004), pp. 89-90; S. Szybkowski, *Kujawska szlachta urzędnicza w późnym średniowieczu (1370-1501)*, Gdańsk 2006, pp. 686-687); Mikołaj Kościelecki (S. Szybkowski, *Kościeleccy ze Skępego i ich protoplaści. Studium z dziejów późnośredniowiecznej rodziny możnowładczej*, Gdańsk 2018, pp. 163-283); Mikołaj Słaka of Ławszów (P. Gąsiorowska, *Słaka Mikołaj*, in: PSB 38 (1997-1998), pp. 628-631; S. Szybkowski, *Krzyżacki szpieg, lubelski mieszczanin i sandomierski chorąży. Kilka uwag w sprawie badań prozopograficznych personelu kancelarii wielkiego księcia Witolda*, "Gdańskie Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza" 4

Additional arguments work in favour of the fact that such an election at a land assembly/sejmik was most likely to have taken place in the case of deputies from Greater Poland (Poznań and Kalisz voivodeships). In fact, on 16 September 1435, in Środa (the traditional location for the land assemblies/sejmiks of Greater Poland), the general starosta (general royal governor) of Greater Poland, Andrzej Ciołek of Żelechów, issued a document by virtue of which Wojciech Górski was exempted from attending court sessions, because *vadit versus Cracouiam et ubi necessitas fuerit pro communi bono huius sacre Corone*.³² This exemption certainly related to Górski's subsequent participation in the general assembly/sejm of Cracow in October. Górski undoubtedly received this document during the sessions of the land assembly/sejmik of Greater Poland in Środa, which is clearly evidenced by the fact that sources confirm his presence in that town on 16-17 September 1435. In addition to the general starosts, there was also a large group of Greater Poland land officials and one of the local tutors (*tutores*), among whom were also other *nuncii terrarum* later present in Cracow: the judge of Poznań, Abraham of Zbąszyń; the pantler of Poznań, Zygmunt of Margonin; and the starosta of Wschowa, Maciej Borek of Osieczna.³³ All this together leads to concluding that at the same land assembly/sejmik of the nobility of Greater Poland in Środa Wojciech Górski, Abraham Zbąski, Maciej Borek of Osieczna, and Zygmunt of Margonin were elected as land deputies and delegated to the general assembly/sejm in Cracow. It is likely that the elections of the other

(1997), pp. 271-277); Abraham of Zbąszyń (A. Gąsiorowski, *Husyty Abrahama Zbąskiego działalność publiczna*, in: idem, *Państwo i społeczeństwo późnośredniowiecznej Polski*, ed. T. Jurek, A. Kozak, Warszawa-Poznań 2022, pp. 299-305); Zygmunt of Margonin (A. Szweđa, *Ród Grzymałków w Wielkopolsce*, Toruń 2001, pp. 63-68); Klemens of Bechcice (A. Szymczakowa, *Milites strenui z Sieradzkiego w XV w.*, in: *Genealogia. Rola związków rodzinnych i rodowych w życiu publicznym w Polsce średniowiecznej na tle porównawczym*, ed. A. Radzimiński, J. Wroniszewski, Toruń 1996, pp. 205, 210; eadem, *Szlachta sieradzka w XV wieku. Magnifici et generosi*, Łódź 1998, pp. 281-283); Maciej Borek of Osieczna (A. Gąsiorowski, *Maciej Borek*, in: *PSB* 19 (1974), p. 33; *Słownik historyczno-geograficzny województwa poznańskiego w średniowieczu*, part IV, ed. P. Dembiński, K. Górską-Gołaska, T. Jurek, J. Luciński, G. Rutkowska, I. Skierska, Poznań 1993-1999, pp. 463-466; Wojciech Górski (W. Brzeziński, *Krąg rodzinny kasztelana łędzkiego Wojciecha Górskiego herbu Łódzia*, „*Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza*” 18 (2014), pp. 16-19).

32 *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, X, ed. A. Gąsiorowski, T. Jasiński, Poznań 1993, no. 1390; W. Brzeziński, *Krąg rodzinny kasztelana łędzkiego Wojciecha Górskiego herbu Łódzia*, „*Studia z Dziejów Średniowiecza*” 18 (2014), p. 17.

33 Archiwum Państwowe w Poznaniu, Poznań Gr. 1, pp. 224-226, in addition to the mentioned *nuncii* and the general starosta, the following certainly participated in it: voivode of Poznań, Sędziwoj of Ostroróg; castellan of Gniezno, Piotr of Bnin; castellan of Kamień, Dobrogost Koleński; chamberlain of Kalisz and tutor of Greater Poland, Dobrogost Świdwa of Szamotuły; sub-judge of Poznań, Piotr Skóra z Gaju; sub-judge of Kalisz, Bogusz of Budziszław; starosta (royal governor) of Kościan, Łukasz of Górka; and starosta (royal governor) of Śrem, Jan Polak of Lichwin.

nunciorum known to us by name, who were present at the October 1435 Cracow general assembly/sejm, were similar: Mikołaj Kościelecki (representing the nobility from Kujawy or Dobrzyń lands), Stanisław Szczkowski (representing the nobility from Kujawy land), Klemens Bechcicki (representing the nobility from Łęczyca land), and Mikołaj Słaka of Ławszów (representing, most likely, the nobility from Sandomierz land).

Having presented the issue of the land deputies known from the sejm of Cracow of 1435 and the probability that they were elected at land assemblies/sejmiks, it is still necessary to refer to the event described in Jan Długosz's *Annales* that took place more than a year earlier. In this source's narrative, in the case of the discussion concerning the coronation of the juvenile Władysław III at the coronation assembly/sejm in July 1434, the aforementioned chronicler included a phrase about: "the voices of the deputies who came from all the lands subject to the Kingdom of Poland" (*vota nunciorum, qui a singulis terris Regno Polonie subiectis, advenerant*).³⁴ This information, in view of our earlier suppositions, could confirm that the land deputies may have been elected and sent already to the aforementioned coronation assembly/sejm. However, at this point it must be clearly emphasised that this information comes from a narrative source, in contrast to the testimony concerning the participation of the land deputies in the general assembly/sejm of Cracow in October 1435. That is because we derive it from a document, and even more so a document preserved in the original.³⁵ Therefore, the work of Jan Długosz has a much lower level of credibility as a typical narrative source. In the first instance, doubts must be raised as to whether the chronicler, who was still very young in 1434 - nineteen years old - was personally present at the coronation assembly/sejm and knew of the events firsthand. The following objection to this account of the *Annales* is that its author may have extrapolated the later, well-known practice of electing land deputies to general assemblies/sejms to the events described. After all, he ultimately edited his work rather late in his life (d. 1480). Finally, doubts concerning relating the information of interest here from Jan Długosz's *Annales* concerning the presence of land deputies at the coronation assembly/sejm are further raised by the phrase that they came from "lands subordinate" to the Kingdom of Poland, which would indicate envoys of lords of fief lands.

However, the doubts presented above did not prevent earlier researchers of this problem from interpreting the part of Długosz's work we are analysing as evidence of the presence of land deputies in July 1434. The German medievalist Jacob Caro had no doubts about this, as in his synthesis of the history of medieval Poland he concluded, on the basis of the above-mentioned

34 Długosz, lib. 11-12, p. 134.

35 *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich*, vol. 8, no. 2182.

source, that the land deputies participated in 1434 in the election and coronation of Władysław III.³⁶ However, a slightly different opinion was held by Franciszek Piekosiński, who believed that these deputies were envoys from the “conquered” lands, *i.e.*, from the “Ruthenian lands”.³⁷ In terms of the more recent researchers of the issue, Juliusz Bardach initially considered these deputies to be land deputies, as did J. Caro,³⁸ but later he followed the opinion of F. Piekosiński, stating that in 1434 the coronation assemblies/sejm of Władysław III was attended by envoys of “lands subject to the Kingdom of Poland [...], *i.e.*, Mazovia, Podolia, Moldova”.³⁹ The final interpretation of J. Bardach was also accepted by W. Uruszczak.⁴⁰

The matter should therefore rather be considered as resolved. The deputies participating in the election and coronation of Władysław III were envoys from lands subordinate to the Kingdom of Poland, not land deputies elected by land assemblies of the nobility/sejmiks. However, while the literature on the subject fully accepts that they originated in Moldova, which was feudal to Poland, it is doubtful whether they came from the Ruthenian lands and Podolia (after all, these were in fact part of the Polish Kingdom and not feudal lands), or from the feudal Mazovia. A more certain identification of these envoys is only possible on the logical assumption that Jan Długosz's *Annales* constitutes a coherent and clear account. The mention of envoys from lands “subject to the Kingdom” was, after all, included in the chapter of his work devoted to disputes concerning the coronation of the underage king. In turn, this chapter is preceded by a chapter which mentions, among other things, the arrival at the coronation assembly/sejm of envoys from the Lithuanian Grand Duke Sigismund Kęstutaitis, and the Moldovian Hospodar Stephen II,⁴¹ and the personal appearances of the Mazovian Dukes Siemowit I, Kazimierz II, and Bolesław IV.⁴² Thus, accepting our earlier assumption concerning the coherence of the chronicler's narrative in the part of the *Annales* that interests us, it should be concluded that, when writing in the following

36 J. Caro, *Dzieje Polski*, vol. 4, transl. S. Mieczysławski, Warszawa 1897, p. 106.

37 F. Piekosiński, *Wiece...*, p. 216.

38 J. Bardach, *Historia państwa i prawa Polski*, vol. 1: *Do połowy XV wieku*, Warszawa 1964², p. 445.

39 Idem, *Początki sejmku*, in: *Historia sejmku polskiego*, vol. 1: *Do schyłku szlacheckiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1984, p. 17; idem, *Sejm dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, in: *Dzieje Sejmu Polskiego*, ed. J. Michalski, Warszawa 1997², p. 16.

40 W. Uruszczak, *Poselstwo sejmowe w dawnej Polsce. Poślaniec...*, p. 51; idem, *Pierwszy sejm walny koronny...*, p. 78.

41 About his relations with the Kingdom of Poland and the internal situation in Moldova, see: I. Czamańska, *Mołdawia i Wołoszczyzna wobec Polski, Węgier i Turcji w XIV i XV wieku*, Poznań 1996, pp. 89-96.

42 Długosz, lib. 11-12, p. 132.

chapter of his chronicle about "the voices of the deputies of the lands subordinate to the Kingdom of Poland", he undoubtedly had in mind the deputies of Lithuania and Moldova, and not those of Ruthenia, Podolia, or Mazovia (after all, the Mazovian dukes came to the coronation assembly/sejm in person). This finding also further justifies the view that Długosz's work is certainly not about land deputies, but about envoys of the fiefs of the Kingdom, and he regarded the Grand Dukes of Lithuania as such, as the heir to the political views of his patron and mentor, Bishop of Cracow Zbigniew Oleśnicki.⁴³

III

Also important, and so far, insufficiently exploited by the source literature, is the information concerning the representation of the state nobility at the general assembly/sejm of Parczew, which took place in the late spring of 1453, thus during the reign of King Kazimierz Jagiellończyk (1447-1492). According to the royal itinerary, its session should be dated 3-9 June 1453.⁴⁴ This general assembly/sejm is relatively extensively presented in Jan Długosz's *Annales*,⁴⁵ although we also have an account of the deputies of the Prussian states who, after arriving in Parczew, held meetings with the king and several Polish magnates.⁴⁶ The issues that dominated the general assembly were the significant problems in Polish-Lithuanian relations and the question of confirming the general privileges for the nobility, which had been dragging on since the coronation of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk (1447). Prussian affairs, despite the visit to Parczew by a delegation of the local states and a deputation from Grand Master Ludwig von Erlichshausen (incorrectly named by Długosz as his uncle and predecessor in office, Konrad), were only a marginal topic there. This has already been extensively discussed in older and more recent literature on the subject.⁴⁷

43 J. Nikodem, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki wobec unii polsko-litewskiej do śmierci Jagiełły*, "Nasza Przyszłość" 91 (1999), pp. 142-147; idem, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki wobec unii polsko litewskiej w latach 1434-1453*, "Nasza Przyszłość" 92 (1999), pp. 130-133; J. Tęgowski, *Stosunek Zbigniewa Oleśnickiego do unii Polski z Litwą*, in: *Zbigniew Oleśnicki książę Kościoła i mąż stanu*, ed. F. Kiryk, Z. Noga, Kraków 2006, pp. 83-84.

44 G. Rutkowska, *Itinerarium króla Kazimierza Jagiellończyka*, Warszawa 2014, pp. 119-120.

45 Długosz, lib. 12, Cracoviae 2003, pp. 157-162.

46 *Acten der Ständetage Preussens unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens*, vol. 3, ed. M. Toeppen, Lepzig 1882, pp. 668-673.

47 O. Halecki, *Ostatnie lata Świdrygiełły i sprawa wołyńska za Kazimierza Jagiellończyka*, Kraków 1914, pp. 204-214; idem, *Dzieje Unii Jagiellońskiej*, vol. 1, Warszawa 1919, pp. 379-381; S.C. Rowell, *Bears and Traitors, or: Political Tensions in the Grand Duchy, ca. 1440-1481*, "Lithuanian Historical Studies" 2 (1997), 2, pp. 37-38; K. Górski, *Przyczynek do zjazdu parczewskiego 3 VI 1453 r.*, "Roczniki Historyczne" 17 (1948), pp. 176-178; idem, *Rządy wewnętrzne Kazimierza*

In his *Annales*, Jan Długosz only wrote about the representation of the Polish nobility in Parczew that the dignitaries of the Kingdom came to the general assembly/sejm in considerable numbers (*dignitarii regni in notabili numero*).⁴⁸ Our knowledge of this problem is expanded by two reports of the Teutonic informant Nicholas Scharar (alias NS Arman) addressed to his Teutonic principals. In the first, written down on 17 May 1453 in Toruń, he reported that the king had set a date for a general assembly with the Lithuanians two weeks after Pentecost (which coincides with beginning the general assembly in Parczew) and called by letter “two from each family of the Kingdom” (*nu hat seyne konigliche gnade brieffe gesand, alß weit, alß das koningreich zcu Polan ist, das uß itczlichen geslechte sulden czwene komen*). The spy also added that he had been present during four land assemblies preceding this one (where the royal letter in question was probably read out), with their participants unanimously expressing their indignation at the aforementioned formula for the nobility representation, presuming that the king was influenced by the Lithuanians in this matter.⁴⁹ Scharar’s following spy report was written on 20 June 1453 (again in Toruń) and constituted an account of the Parczew general assembly.⁵⁰ In it, the informant repeated his earlier information that, for the Parczew general assembly, Kazimierz Jagiellończyk called for two representatives from each “coat of arms” (literally “shield”) (*wie das der koning van Polan gebot alle seynen herren alß weit, alß koningreich was, das uß itczlichen schilde sulden czwene komen bey seyner holde in das gespreche ken Parchczewa*). He also added that the “lords of Cracow” had arrived there on “three hundred

Jagiellończyka w Koronie, in: M. Biskup, K. Górski, Kazimierz Jagiellończyk. *Zbiór studiów o Polsce drugiej połowy XV wieku*, Olsztyn 1987, pp. 86-88; M. Biskup, *Zjednoczenie Pomorza Wschodniego z Polską w połowie XV wieku*, Warszawa 1959, pp. 193-197; S. Gawęda, K. Pieradzka, J. Radziszewska, *Rozbiór krytyczny Annalium Poloniae Jana Długosza z lat 1445-1480*, vol. 2, Wrocław 1965, pp. 53-55; J. Kurtyka, *Tęczyńscy...*, pp. 350-351; J. Nikodem, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki wobec unii polsko-litewskiej w latach 1434-1453*, pp. 126-128; M. Antoniewicz, *O “rozbratanii” się panów litewskich ze szlachtą polską w Parczewie, czyli o wiarygodności relacji w Kronice Bychowca*, in: *Heraldyka i okolice*, ed. A. Rachuba, S. Górzyński, H. Manikowska, Warszawa 2002, pp. 110-115; B. Czwojdrak, *Rogowscy herbu Działosza podskarbiowie królewscy. Studium z dziejów możnowładztwa polskiego w drugiej połowie XIV i w XV wieku*, Katowice 2002, pp. 78-79; G. Błaszczyk, *Dzieje...*, vol. 2, part 1, pp. 838-844; L. Kolankowski, *Dzieje Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego za Jagiellonów*, vol. 1, Oświęcim 2014², pp. 250-251; A. Sochacka, *Jan z Czyżowa...*, pp. 193-194.

⁴⁸ Długosz, lib. 12, p. 157.

⁴⁹ Geheimen Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (henceforth: GSPK), Ordensbriefarchiv (henceforth: OBA), no. 12035; M. Duda, S. Józwiak, S. Szybkowski, *Działalność krzyżackiego szpiega o pseudonimie „N.S. Arman” w Królestwie Polskim w połowie XV wieku i jego tożsamość*, “Średniowiecze Polskie i Powszechne” 14 (2022), p. 249.

⁵⁰ GSPK, OBA, no. 12131; printed by: L. Kolankowski, *Dzieje...*, p. 251, subnote 135; M. Duda, S. Józwiak, S. Szybkowski, *Działalność...*, p. 253.

horses" and made claims against the king that the monarch, contrary to past custom, had demanded that only a small representation of the nobility (*i.e.*, two people from each noble clan) be present at the general assembly/sejm. In doing so, they referred to the practice from the reign of his father, Władysław Jagiełło, because when serious issues were being considered, the "entire country" (*das gantcze reich*) was entitled to come to general assemblies/sejms.⁵¹

Similarly, as in the case of Nicholas Steinchen's account of 1432, reference must be made to the reliability of both of Nicholas Scharar's accounts. This burgher of Toruń origin was active in the Kingdom of Poland from the 1430s, mainly in Kujawy, the Dobrzyń region, as well as the adjacent areas (he was a burgher of Rypin). Initially, he belonged to the clientele of the voivode of Brześć Kujawski, Jan of Licheń, and later became associated with an important magnate family from Kujawy and the Dobrzyń land: the Kretkowski family. The reports he has written show that he also had close relations with other magnates from northern Poland, which enabled him to participate in land assemblies/sejmiki, provincial assemblies in Koło, and even in general assemblies/sejms. The level of credibility concerning his knowledge of political life, including parliamentary life in Poland in the early 1450s should be considered very high, because, even if he was not always personally involved in these events, he was able to reach the participants of these events.⁵² Therefore, it seems that there can be no doubt that in 1453, Kazimierz Jagiellończyk called for two representatives from each knightly clan to the general assembly/sejm of Parczew. It also seems, although Scharar's reports do not explicitly specify this, that this was modelled on the similar practice from the final years of his father, Władysław Jagiełło's reign, already described above. Two representatives of each noble clan from a particular land were therefore called for the general assembly of Parczew, and therefore the representation was of a noble clan-territorial nature. The protests of the mighty and the nobility resulting from this should also be considered authentic, as they demanded that all representatives of the noble state be allowed to participate in the general assemblies/sejms, which was considered a historic and rightful practice, still in use during the reign of Władysław Jagiełło. However, referring to the times of his late father Kazimierz Jagiellończyk was not fully in line with reality, as he, as we have pointed out earlier, incidentally appointed a representation of the nobility in a noble clan-territorial form. The protesters had a better memory of the practice of general assembly/sejm sessions of 1440-1447, when, as W. Fałkowski believed: "sejm sessions were open and accessible to all

51 M. Duda, S. Józwiak, S. Szybkowski, *Działalność...*, p. 253.

52 Ibidem, pp. 237-268.

who came to the parliamentary session".⁵³ Although the same researcher also applied this principle to the general assemblies/sejms of Jagiełło's reign ("the sessions were open and everyone could take part in them").⁵⁴

IV

The primary sources we have discussed above indicate that forming the representation of the nobility delegated to general assemblies/sejms was much more complicated than previously thought. Already, during the final period of the reign of Władysław Jagiełło there were appointments of land deputies on a noble clan-territorial basis. Evidence of the general assembly/sejm of Cracow in December 1432/January 1433, a consequence of establishing a representation of the nobility not holding office in this form consisted of the form of the documents of the nobility of Brześć Kujawski (1433) and Dobrzyń (1434) lands concerning the succession to the throne in Poland after the death of Władysław Jagiełło. The representatives of the local noble *communitas* listed there, in the form of land officials and two representatives of each noble clan in the land, probably reflect the form of representation of each land to the aforementioned general assembly/sejm. It cannot be ruled out that a similar form of parliamentary representation (officials and up to two representatives of each noble clan from the land) was already known earlier, as it was mentioned in a letter of Władysław Jagiełło from 1423, the reliability of which is questionable, when the account of noble clan representation for the general assembly/sejm of 1432/1433 should be considered fully reliable. After Władysław Jagiełło's death, the land deputies appeared at the subsequent general assembly/sejm of Cracow in October 1435, as again confirmed by a fully reliable documentary source. It allows the first land deputies from Greater Poland, Kujawy, the Łęczyca, Dobrzyń, and Sandomierz lands during the time of the Jagiellons to be identified by name. Most of them held middle and low land offices, as noted earlier.⁵⁵ Identifying these individuals indicates that they were not a noble clan-territorial representation, but deputies elected at land assemblies/sejmiks from among active and significant representatives of the noble state. The analysis conducted by us concerning the information contained in Jan Długosz's *Annales*, on the other hand, has proven that at the coronation assembly/sejm of Władysław III in July 1435, it was not land deputies who appeared, but deputies of lands

53 W. Fałkowski, *Sejmy bez króla (1440-1446)*, in: „*Historia vero testis temporum*”. Księga jubileuszowa poświęcona profesorowi Krzysztofowi Baczkowskiemu w 70. rocznicę urodzin, ed. J. Smółucha, A. Waśko, T. Graff, P.F. Nowakowski, Kraków 2008, p. 253; idem, *Sejmy bez króla...*, p. 329.

54 Idem, *Proces powstawania polskiego sejmu...*, p. 33.

55 S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródła...*, pp. 86-87; idem, *Szlacheckie elity urzędnicze...*, pp. 115-117.

“subordinated” to the Kingdom of Poland according to the aforementioned chronicler: Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Moldova. The following source confirmation of the call for a general assembly/sejm of noble representation in a noble clan form does not occur until 1453 (general assembly/sejm in Parczew at the beginning of June 1453). Also in this case, the sources in which this is mentioned, the reports of the Teutonic spy Nicholas Scharar, should be regarded as completely reliable. We also learn from them that King Kazimierz Jagiellończyk’s call for the representation of the nobility to the aforementioned general assembly/sejm in this form led to protests before and during this general assembly/sejm. Based on the account of the Teutonic informant, it appears that the protesters believed that the perfect form of noble representation for general assembly/sejms consisted in the participation of all representatives of the noble state from the Kingdom of Poland: “the entire country”.

The considerations presented here lead to more general conclusions. The examples discussed here from the general assemblies/sejms of Cracow in 1432/1433 and Parczew 1453, show that the kings sought to actively shape the composition of the nobility’s parliamentary representation. It seems that they were particularly concerned with drawing representatives of the noble state, who did not hold land offices, into parliamentary life. The monarchy may have had an important interest in this. It seems that it was not only a matter of gaining as much legitimacy as possible for the decisions made at the general assemblies/sejms. It was also important to the monarchy that a formalised shape of noble representation imposed from above in a noble clan-territorial form could have led to politically weaker people entering the ranks of representatives for individual lands. I presume that this provided the monarchs and their immediate entourage a greater opportunity to push forward their own aspirations.⁵⁶ The politically weak representatives of the nobility would have provided a welcome counterbalance here to the politically active members of the royal council, who belonged to the noble layer and the more active representatives of the nobility holding land offices, who were usually recruited from the wealthy nobility, as all of the aforementioned traditionally participated in the general assembly/sejm.⁵⁷ However, the royal aspirations were not well received in the noble community. After the death of Władysław Jagiełło, it did accept the institution of land deputies, at least for some time, as evidenced

56 S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło...*, p. 144.

57 J. Bardach, *Historia państwa i prawa Polski...*, vol. 1, pp. 444-445; idem, *Początki sejmu...*, pp. 14-15; idem, *O stawianiu się sejmu polskiego we współczesnej historiografii*, in: *Parlamentaryzm w Polsce we współczesnej historiografii*, ed. J. Bardach, W. Sudnik, Warszawa 1995, pp. 31, 40-41; W. Uruszczak, *Poselstwo sejmowe w dawnej Polsce. Postanowienia...*, p. 51; idem, *Poselstwo sejmowe w dawnej Polsce...*, p. 49.

by their presence at the general assembly/sejm in Cracow in October 1435. However, at the time that the king's power weakened due to Władysław III being underage, land deputies were certainly not elected on a noble clan-territorial basis, as mentioned earlier.⁵⁸ The nobility, without the king's interference in the process of electing the land's deputies, mainly chose the politically best qualified persons.

The reluctance of the noble community to have the royal power interfere in the shape of the noble representation appointed for the general assemblies/sejms is also shown by the *casus* of the general assembly/sejm in Parczew in 1453. The appointment, undoubtedly modelled on the representation of 1432/1433, of the noble deputies in the shape of the noble clan-territorial representation was met with widespread indignation and protests by the participants in the deliberations. Nicholas Scharar's report explicitly shows that it was ideal for the Polish nobility of the time for the "entire country" to come to general assemblies/sejms, in the sense of the right of all representatives of the noble *communitas* to participate in parliamentary life. By their very nature, this was primarily about politically sophisticated and active people, and above all those interested in participating in political life.

The presented examples seem to indicate yet another important change in the functioning of the Polish noble community. This is because it seems that the clan structure of the Polish nobility, based on the community of blood, was already beginning to gradually become a thing of the past during the reign of Władysław Jagiełło, losing in the confrontation with the community based on territorial ties - the noble communities of the individual lands of the Kingdom (*communitates terrigenarum*). We have information about a certain role of the noble clan structure in Polish parliamentary life from as early as the beginning of the 15th century. The first we know of dates back to 1406, when at the general assembly/sejm in Piotrków it was decided that the resolutions passed there would be confirmed by documents issued at the land assemblies/sejmiks, each of which was to be authenticated with the seals of *each noble clan*.⁵⁹ The assembly of Horodło of 1413 also features noble clan representation, where representatives of Lithuanian Boyar families were accepted into the Polish coat of arms.⁶⁰ However, we do not know what its nature was. Probably, in each of the mentioned cases we are dealing with actions originating from a royal order, as in the case of calling for representation to the general assembly/sejm in Cracow in 1432/1433, or the general assembly in Wiślica planned by the king (?) in 1423.

58 S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło...*, p. 144.

59 *Codex epistolaris...*, I, ed. A. Sokołowski, J. Szujski, Kraków 1876, no. 34.

60 This issue was discussed in detail in the collection *1413 m. Horodlės aktai (dokumentai ir tyrinėjimai)/Akty horodelskie z 1413 roku (dokumenty i studia)*, ed. J. Kiaupienė, L. Korczak, P. Rabiej, E. Rimša, J. Wroniszewski, Vilnius-Kraków 2013.

Therefore, these were not initiatives coming from the nobility. In fact, the form of representation at the general assembly/sejm of 1432/1433 and the land assemblies/sejmiki of Brześć Kujawski (1433) and Dobrzyń (1434) lands had a compromise form: combining the territorial and noble clan principles.⁶¹ It should also be noted that, in a situation where the king did not interfere in the composition of the noble representation, there was no clan representation at the land assemblies/sejmiki of the final years of the reign of Władysław Jagiełło, during which the succession to the throne was decided, as in Brześć Kujawski and Dobrzyń (Ruthenian land assemblies/sejmiki of 1427, Poznań land assemblies/sejmik of 1432)⁶². The reluctance of the nobility to have noble clan-territorial parliamentary representation may also have originated in the difficulty of selecting deputies from a group of nobles not holding office from a particular family. That is because, in a particular clan of knights, land officials were considered to be their leaders, the worthiest to be elected as representatives.⁶³ This reason for this is they were the most politically sophisticated and interested in participating in parliamentary life, and were also wealthy enough to undertake costly journeys to the locations of the general assembly/sejms, which were often far from their homes. Perhaps this constitutes one of the reasons for the short-lived appearance of this form of state representation in the final years of King Jagiełło's reign, and it disappeared at a time when the king's position in Poland was weakened, due to his minority.⁶⁴

The research presented here constitutes only a small contribution to the great historiographical problem, which undoubtedly consists in the development of Polish parliamentarism in the late Middle Ages. However, it points out that there is still the possibility of broadening the source base regarding the principles on which the representation of the nobility at general assembly/sejms was appointed as well as the role of the king in shaping it. Such exploration and research should continue, especially with regard to the significant period in forming Polish parliamentarism at all its known levels (land assemblies/sejmiki, provincial assemblies, general assemblies/sejms) from the accession

⁶¹ For a summary of the discussion, see: S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło...*, pp. 141-144.

⁶² *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Wielkopolski*, vol. 9, Warszawa-Poznań 1990, no. 1289; F. Piekosiński, *Jana Zamoyskiego notaty heraldyczno-sfragistyczne*, in: idem, *Studia, rozprawy i materiały z dziedziny historii polskiej i prawa polskiego*, vol. 6, Kraków 1907, pp. 26-33, 69-85, 99-108; O. Halecki, *Z Jana Zamoyskiego inwentarza Archiwum Koronnego. Materiały do dziejów Rusi i Litwy w XV wieku*, "Archiwum Komisji Historycznej" 12 (1919), 1, pp. 179-193; J. Kurtyka, *Z dziejów walki szlachty ruskiej o równouprawnienie: represje lat 1426-1427 i sejniki roku 1439*, "Roczniki Historyczne" 66 (2000), p. 91; J. Bieniak, *Rody rycerskie jako czynnik struktury społecznej w Polsce XIII-XV wieku. Uwagi problemowe*, in: idem, *Polskie rycerstwo średniowieczne. Wybór pism*, Kraków 2002, pp. 81-82.

⁶³ S. Szybkowski, *Szlacheckie elity urzędnicze...*, pp. 103-124.

⁶⁴ S. Polechow, S. Szybkowski, *Nowe źródło...*, p. 144.

to the throne of Władysław III to the coronation of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk (1434-1447) and the first years of his reign, as postulated by earlier scholars of the subject. Pointing out that during this time the general assembly/sejm took shape as a necessary and indelible element of Polish political life.⁶⁵

Abstract

Creating the principles on which the parliamentary representation of the Polish nobility was delegated to the general assemblies/sejms was a lengthy process that has not yet been sufficiently studied. This results from the dearth of primary sources concerning the subject. A new source illuminating this problem is a report by a Teutonic informant from early December 1432, according to which King Władysław Jagiełło called for representatives of the nobility in a noble clan-territorial form ("two from each noble clan from each land") to a general assembly/sejm in Cracow, which was to begin on 25 December of that year. It cannot be ruled out that a similar form of representation of the ordinary nobility was imposed by the king as early as the first half of the 20s of the 15th century. Contrary to the opinion of some researchers, land deputies did not attend the coronation assembly/sejm of Władysław III in July 1434. On the other hand, we come across land deputies (*nuncii terrarum*) during the general assembly/sejm in Cracow in October 1435. However, they were not delegated on a noble clan-territorial basis, but were most likely elected at land assemblies/sejmiki from among persons of high authority in the local noble communities. We come across another case of applying the noble clan-territorial principle at the beginning of the reign of Kazimierz Jagiellończyk, who called for two representatives of each knightly clan (presumably from each land) to the general assembly/sejm of Parczew in June 1453. However, this was met with protests; the Polish nobility at the time considered it to be ideal for all representatives of this social group to have the right to participate in general assembly/sejms.

Keywords: Kingdom of Poland, king, nobility, noble parliamentary representation, land deputies

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65 W. Fałkowski, *Proces powstawania...*, pp. 34-38.

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ZUR IDENTIFIZIERUNG DES HANDWERKS IN ARCHÄOLOGISCHEN QUELLEN. PROBLEME DER INTERPRETATION



Bei Ausgrabungen in den historischen Zentren der Ostseestädte wurden zahlreiche und vielfältige Funde für die Erforschung des Handwerks gemacht. Sie stellen eine wertvolle Quelle für die Erforschung der verschiedenen Erscheinungsformen handwerklicher Tätigkeiten dar. Ihr hoher Erkenntniswert ermöglicht es, etwas über die Herstellungstechniken, die verwendeten Werkzeuge, Geräte und Rohstoffe sowie über die hergestellten Produkte in Erfahrung zu bringen.¹ Ein wichtiger Aspekt dieser Studien sind die mit Werkstätten identifizierten Produktionsareale. Im Laufe der bisherigen Forschungen wurde eine beträchtliche Anzahl an Werkstätten verschiedener Handwerkszweige entdeckt, darunter Eisenschmieden, Grapengießereien, Töpfereien, Gerbereien und lederverarbeitende Werkstätten, Brauereien und Bäckereien, so dass bereits eine Reihe von Daten über deren Größe, Ausstattung und Lage im Stadtgebiet vorliegt.² Eine besondere Gruppe unter den durch Ausgrabungen ermittelten Produktionsstätten bilden die Werkstätten, in denen die Überreste der Herstellung verschiedener Gegenstände registriert wurden, deren Produktion in der Regel von verschiedenen Handwerkern durchgeführt wurde.

¹ Siehe B. Wywrot-Wyszkowska, *Rzemiosło w późnośredniowiecznych miastach południowego pobrzeża Bałtyku. Studium archeologiczne*, Szczecin 2019, dort auch die wichtigste Literatur.

² Ibidem, S. 27–176.

Spuren solcher Tätigkeiten wurden u. a. in Lübeck,³ Stralsund,⁴ Greifswald,⁵ Kolberg⁶ und Tallinn⁷ entdeckt. Man kann daher davon ausgehen, dass die Durchführung einer diversifizierten Produktion in einer einzigen Werkstatt ein fester Bestandteil des Wirtschaftslebens der Städte jener Zeit war. In diesem Beitrag soll anhand ausgewählter Beispiele versucht werden, die Art der in solchen Werkstätten durchgeführten Produktion und die berufliche Identifikation der mit ihnen verbundenen Handwerker zu bestimmen.

Ein interessantes Beispiel für die Verbindung verschiedener Produktionszweige in einer Hand ist eine Werkstatt, die in Kolberg auf einer Parzelle in der heutigen Armii Krajowej-Straße 5A entdeckt wurde. Diese Werkstatt befand sich in einem kleinen Flechtwerkgebäude auf dem Hof des dortigen Grundstücks und war zwischen dem vierten Viertel des 13. Jhs. und dem frühen 14. Jh. in Betrieb. Hier wurden Messerscheiden mit Metallbeschlägen hergestellt. Davon zeugen Lederabfälle – darunter mehr als 800 Abschnitte von weichen und sensiblen Ziegen- und Hirschhäuten –, und verschiedene Gegenstände (mehr als 50 Exemplare), die fast alle Phasen der Herstellung von eisernen Beschlägen illustrieren. Innerhalb des Werkstattareals fanden sich 27 Scheiden und eine Ansammlung von mehreren Messern mit ähnlicher Form und einer Länge von etwa 25 cm. Darüber hinaus wurden Stücke von Eisenblechen erfasst, darunter zusammengenietete Exemplare und lose Eisengriffe. Im selben stratigrafischen Kontext wurden mehr als 200 Produktionsabfälle und Halbfabrikate entdeckt, die mit der Knochen-, Geweih- und Hornverarbeitung verbunden sind. Diese Funde veranschaulichen die aufeinanderfolgenden Produktionsstufen von drei verschiedenen Produkten. Die Metapodienknochen von Rindern wurden zur Herstellung von Messergriffhülsen und Hirschgeweihstücke zur Herstellung von Auskleidungen, während man aus Rinderhörnern einlagige, doppelseitige Kämme herstellte.⁸

3 U. Müller, *Archäologische und baugeschichtliche Untersuchungen der Budenzeile Hüxstraße 78–82 in Lübeck*. „Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte“ 22 (1992), S. 167–199.

4 R. Samariter, *Ein Aachener Pilgerzeichen und Handwerkerabfall aus einem Laufbrunnen in der Stralsunder Hafenvorstadt*, „Archäologische Berichte aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ 14 (2007), S. 157–168; eadem, *Handwerk am Semlower Tor*, „Stralsunder Hefte für Geschichte, Kultur und Alltag“ (2010), S. 57–62.

5 C. Schäfer, *Die mittelalterlichen Befunde und Funde von der Ausgrabung an der Ost- und Südseite des Greifswalder Rathauses im Jahre 1996*, „Archäologische Berichte aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ Beiheft 9 (2005), S. 7–53.

6 B. Wywrot-Wyszkowska, *Skórnictwo w lokacyjnym Kołobrzegu. XIII–XV wiek*, Szczecin 2008, S. 113–114; eadem, *Rzemiosło...*, S. 128, 129.

7 H. Luik, L. Maldre, *Lautõõtleisest Tallinna eeslinnas. Roosikrantsi tänava püirkonnas 13.–17. Sajandil*, „Esti Arheoloogia Ajakiri“ 7 (2003), 1, S. 3–37.

8 M. Rębkowski, *Pracownie rogownicze oraz ich produkty oraz zabytki wykonane z innych surowców*, in: *Archeologia średniowiecznego Kołobrzegu IV*, hg. v. Marian Rębkowski, Kołobrzeg 1999, S. 272–277.

An dieser Stelle stellen sich folgende Fragen: Mit welchem Handwerkszweig kann die Tätigkeit dieser Werkstatt in Verbindung gebracht werden? Wie kann man die Spezialisierung des dort arbeitenden Handwerkers bestimmen? Die Antworten sind nicht eindeutig. Es scheint, dass in dieser Werkstatt hauptsächlich Messer und Messerscheiden hergestellt wurden. Die Arbeit bestand also aus der Herstellung von Messerklingen und dem Zusammensetzen von Scheiden, Klingen und Griffen. Die fertigen Messer wurden mit einer Lederscheide versehen. Andererseits können Funde von Eisenblechstücken und Eisengriffe für die Herstellung oder Reparatur von Kesseln sprechen. Wahrscheinlich ist die Herstellung von Kämmen als Nebenbeschäftigung anzusehen. Mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit kann davon ausgegangen werden, dass es sich um eine – im zeitgenössischen Sprachgebrauch – multidisziplinäre Werkstatt handelte, auch wenn die schriftliche Überlieferung eine solche Interpretation nicht unterstützt.⁹

Etwas anders geartet war die Tätigkeit der Lübecker Werkstatt, die auf der Parzelle Huxstraße 80 aufgedeckt wurde und in der zweiten Hälfte des 13. bis zum Beginn des 14. Jhs. tätig war. Dort wurden Rosenkranzperlen aus Knochen und Bernstein hergestellt, wie das Vorhandensein von Rohmaterialbrocken, Halbfertig- und Fertigprodukten im Fundmaterial beweist, die alle Stufen des Produktionsprozesses dieser Gegenstände widerspiegeln. Innerhalb des Werkstattgeländes wurden auch Abfälle von der Herstellung von Knochenkämmen sowie Fragmente von Bronzedraht, Metallschrott in Form von Bronzeblechabschnitten und ein Tontiegel gefunden.¹⁰ Die letztgenannten Funde könnten auch auf eine Tätigkeit hinweisen, bei der kleine Gegenstände gegossen wurden, höchstwahrscheinlich Schmuck, Applikationen oder Trachtbestandteile.

In Stralsund wurde in der Grabung am Semlower Tor eine Grube aus dem 14. Jh. freigelegt, die Abfallprodukte (Rohmaterial, Halbfabrikate) aus der Herstellung von Rosenkranzperlen aus Knochen und Bernstein

9 Historischen Untersuchungen zufolge spezialisierten sich in den spätmittelalterlichen Städten einzelne Handwerkszweige auf die Verarbeitung bestimmter Arten von Rohstoffen (z. B. Metalle, Holz, Mineralien, pflanzliche und tierische Rohstoffe), die Erbringung von Dienstleistungen und die Herstellung von Nahrungsmitteln, siehe z. B. Th. Hirsch, *Danzigs Handels- und Gewerbsgeschichte unter der Herrschaft des Deutschen Ordens*, Leipzig 1858, S. 293–330; O. Blümcke, *Die Handwerkszünfte im mittelalterlichen Stettin*, „Baltische Studien“ Alte Folge 34, S. 81–240; W. Stieda, C. Mettig, *Schragen der Gilden und Aemter der Stadt Riga bis 1621*, Riga 1896, S. 34–77; O. Krause, K. Kunze, *Die älteren Zunfturkunden der Stadt Greifswald, Teil I*, „Pommersche Jahrbücher“ 1 (1900), S. 99–169; idem, *Die älteren Zunfturkunden der Stadt Greifswald, Teil. II*, „Pommersche Jahrbücher“ 2 (1901), S. 111–157; G. Möller, *Das Handwerk in der Stadt Stralsund vom 13. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert*, in: *Lübecker Kolloquium zur Stadtarchäologie im Hanseraum V: Das Handwerk* (weiterhin zit.: *Lübecker Kolloquium*), hg. v. M. Gläser, Lübeck 2006, S. 242.

10 U. Müller, *Archäologische...*, S. 170, Abb. 8.

enthielt. Zu den Funden gehörten auch Gussformen aus Stein und zerbrochene Gegenstände zum erneuten Einschmelzen. Außerdem wurden aus einer Kupferlegierung gegossene Trommelsteine gefunden, von denen einer noch nicht fertiggestellt war, wie eine Naht an seinem Bügel beweist. Es ist jedoch nicht bekannt, wo sich die Werkstatt befand, aus der die besprochenen Funde stammten. Es ist möglich, dass sie sich in der Nähe der Abfallhalde befand. Der Handwerker, der zu dieser Werkstatt gehörte, stellte Rosenkränze aus Knochen und Bernstein her und goss Trommeln, Kleidungsbesätze und andere kleine Gegenstände.¹¹ Die Anhäufung von Schrott lässt auch vermuten, dass in kleinen Werkstätten, in denen parallel zur Herstellung von Gegenständen aus verschiedenen Rohstoffen auch Gießereiarbeiten durchgeführt wurden, die für ihren Bedarf verwendeten Metalle fast ausschließlich aus zerstörten Produkten gewonnen werden konnten.

Eine weitere Fundgruppe aus Stralsund, die mit der Herstellung von Buntmetallschmuck und Knochenobjekten in Zusammenhang steht, wurde in der Hafenvorstadt entdeckt. Aus der Verfüllung eines Brunnens aus dem 14. Jh. in der Wasserstraße wurden Abfälle in Form von Messingblechstücken mit Negativen von geschnittenen Rundbeschlägen oder anderem Schmuck ausgegraben. Darüber hinaus wurden ca. 400 Knochenfragmente mit Bearbeitungsspuren (Produktionsabfälle, Halbzeug und Halbfertigprodukte) registriert, unter denen 105 Stücke aus der Herstellung von Spielwürfeln identifiziert wurden.¹² Bei den Funden handelt es sich wahrscheinlich um Abfälle aus einer nahegelegenen Werkstatt.

In Greifswald wurden in den Buden an der Südseite des Rathauses Funde entdeckt, die auf eine vielfältige Produktion in einer einzigen Werkstatt hindeuten. In einem solchen Raum wurden Steingussformen, Fragmente von Bronze- und Bleigegenständen, Schlacke und Knochenfragmente mit Negativen von geschnittenen Perlen oder Knöpfen gefunden. Diese Werkstatt war in der zweiten Hälfte des 15. Jhs. in Betrieb. Zu ihren Tätigkeiten gehörte das Gießen von Schmuck und kleinen Anhängern, die zur Verzierung von Lederwaren oder Kleidungsstücken verwendet wurden, sowie die Herstellung von Rosenkränzen und/oder Knöpfen aus Knochen.¹³

In Tallinn wurden auf dem Grundstück in der Roosikrantsi-Straße 9–11 116 Knochen- und Geweihfunde, darunter auch Produktionsabfälle, aus dem 13. bis 17. Jh. entdeckt. Bei fast der Hälfte der Funde handelte es sich um Fragmente von Rippen, Schulter- und Langknochen von Rindern mit Negativen von geschnittenen Rosenkranzperlen und Knöpfen. Es wurden

11 R. Samariter, *Handwerk...*, S. 61 ff.

12 R. Samariter, *Ein Aachener Pilgerzeichen...*, S. 161 ff.

13 C. Schäfer, *Die mittelalterlichen...*, S. 34 ff.

auch einige Fertigprodukte geborgen.¹⁴ Das Ausgrabungsmaterial enthielt auch einzelne Bruchstücke von beschädigten Bronzegefäßen und ein Schmelztiegelfragment.¹⁵

Bei den genannten Werkstätten ist eine gewisse Regelmäßigkeit festzustellen. Die Produktionspalette umfasste Schmuck und Trachtenaccessoires, aber auch Rosenkränze, Spielwürfel und Kämmе. Zu den verwendeten Rohstoffen gehörten Metalle, v. a. Kupferlegierungen, Knochen und Geweih sowie Bernstein. Sowohl die hergestellten Produktgruppen als auch die verwendeten Rohstoffe sprechen dafür, dass es sich bei den entdeckten Werkstätten in Stralsund, Greifswald und Lübeck um die Arbeitsstätten von Paternostermachern handelte, die neben Rosenkränzen auch Schmuck und andere Gegenstände aus Buntmetallen herstellten.

Überreste der Knochen-, Horn- und Geweihherstellung wurden in allen genannten Werkstätten gefunden. In den Ostseestädten war diese Tätigkeit von ganz besonderer Art. Wie die vorangegangenen Beobachtungen gezeigt haben, waren nur bestimmte Kategorien von Knochenobjekten das Werk von Handwerkern, die sich auf ihre Herstellung spezialisiert hatten.¹⁶ Zu diesen Produkten gehören auch Kämmе. Dies beweisen die Entdeckungen von Kammwerkstätten in Lübeck,¹⁷ Rostock,¹⁸ Greifswald¹⁹ und Kolberg²⁰. Die in diesen erfassten Abfälle standen fast ausschließlich im Zusammenhang mit der Herstellung von Kämmen, für die v. a. Metapodien und Hornscheiden verwendet wurden. Auch die Herstellung von Rosenkränzen wurde von spezialisierten Handwerkern durchgeführt. Paternostermacher waren

14 H. Luik, L. Maldre, *Luutöötleisest Tallinna...*, S. 21 ff.

15 Von diesem Fundplatz sind nur die Knochenfunde veröffentlicht worden. Während meines Forschungsaufenthalts am Historischen Institut der Universität Tallinn hatte ich auch die Gelegenheit, andere Funde zu untersuchen.

16 B. Wywrot-Wyszkowska, *Rzemiosło...*, S. 142, 143.

17 D. Mührenberg, *Archäologische und baugeschichtliche Untersuchungen im Handwerkerviertel zu Lübeck. Befunde Hundestraße 9–17. Mit einem botanischen Beitrag zu den spätmittelalterlichen und frühneuzeitlichen Pflanzenresten von Henk van Haaster*, „Lübecker Schriften zur Archäologie und Kulturgeschichte“ 16 (1989), S. 241; eadem, *Das Handwerk in Lübeck vom 12. bis zum 18. Jahrhundert im Spiegel archäologischer Funde und Befunde*, in: *Lübecker Kolloquium*, S. 258.

18 R. Mulsow, *Archäologische Belege zum mittelalterlichen Handwerk in Rostock*, in: *Handwerk – Stadt – Hanse, Ergebnisse der Archäologie zum mittelalterlichen Handwerk im südlichen Ostseeraum* (weiterhin zit.: *Handwerk – Stadt – Hanse*), hg. v. U. Müller, Frankfurt am Main 2000, S. 199, 211; idem, *Archäologische Nachweise zum mittelalterlichen Handwerk in Rostock*, in: *Lübecker Kolloquium*, S. 286 f.

19 R. Samariter, *Ein Greifswalder Kammacher aus der zweiten Hälfte des 13. Jahrhunderts*, „Archäologische Berichte aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ 11 (2004), S. 69–72.

20 B. Wywrot-Wyszkowska, *Zabytki z poroża, kości i rogu oraz z innych surowców*, in: *Archeologia średniowiecznego Kołobrzegu VI*, hg. v. Beata Wywrot-Wyszkowska, Marek Dworaczyk, Marian Rebkowski, Kołobrzeg 2016, S. 191.

in Lübeck,²¹ Stralsund,²² Danzig²³ und Riga²⁴ nachweislich tätig. Spielutensilien und Knöpfe hingegen wurden in der Regel in Verbindung mit oder am Rande der Produktion anderer Erzeugnisse hergestellt. Dies war der Fall in einer Werkstatt in Tallinn, in der neben Rosenkränzen auch Knöpfe hergestellt wurden.²⁵ Mit einer ähnlichen Situation haben wir es in Stralsund zu tun, wo eine Werkstatt entdeckt wurde, in der gleichzeitig Metallapplikationen und Spielwürfel hergestellt wurden.²⁶ Diese Produkte wurden sogar von Grapengießern hergestellt, wie in der Rostocker Werkstatt, die auf der Parzelle in der Wollenwebersraße 33/Sackpfeife entdeckt wurde.²⁷

Das Knochenmaterial wurde in verschiedenen Handwerkszweigen verwendet. Dazu gehörten Messermacher, die ihre eigenen Knochen- oder Geweihfuturale und Messergriffhülsen herstellten, wie das Beispiel der bereits erwähnten Werkstatt in Kolberg zeigt, in der auch Messer gefertigt wurden. In Stralsund wurden auf der Parzelle Kleinschmiedestraße 8 die Reste einer Büchsenmacherwerkstatt aus der zweiten Hälfte des 16. Jahrhunderts entdeckt, in der Abfälle, Halbfertig- und Fertigprodukte aus der Herstellung von reich verzierten Geweih- und Beineinlagen erfasst wurden. Einlageplättchen wurden für die Verzierung hölzerner Schäfte von Handfeuerwaffen verwendet.²⁸

Wie aus den angeführten Beispielen hervorgeht, unterlag die Herstellung von Knochenprodukten in den Ostseestädten aufgrund des reichlichen Angebots und des niedrigen Preises des Rohmaterials keinerlei Beschränkungen, so dass diese Tätigkeit in einer Vielzahl von Werkstätten ausgeübt werden konnte.²⁹ Das Vorhandensein von Knochenabfällen in Werkstätten, in denen Spuren einer vielfältigen Produktion festgestellt wurden, ist daher mit großer Vorsicht zu interpretieren. Denn ihre Anhäufung ist kein ausreichendes Argument dafür, dass ein Knochenschnitzer in einer bestimmten Werkstatt tätig war.

21 W. Stieda, *Lübeckische Bernsteindreher oder Paternostermacher*, „Mittheilungen des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Alterthumskunde“ 2 (1887), S. 112 ff.

22 G. Möller, *Das Handwerk...*, S. 242.

23 Th. Hirsch, *Danzigs Handels- und Gewerbsgeschichte...*, S. 323.

24 W. Stieda, C. Mettig, *Schrägen...*, S. 38.

25 H. Luik, L. Maldre, *Luutöötleisest Tallinna...*, S. 21 ff.

26 R. Samariter, *Ein Aachener Pilgerzeichen...*, S. 161 ff.

27 R. Mulsow, *Ein abgebranntes Holzhaus des 13. Jahrhunderts mit Nachweisen handwerklicher Tätigkeit von der Rostocker Sackpfeife*, „Archäologische Berichte aus Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ 7 (2000), S. 257.

28 L. Radohs, J. Ansoerge, *Renaissancezeitliche Bein- und Geweiheinlagen aus Stralsund – archäologische Hinterlassenschaften eines Büchschenschafters*, „Bodendenkmalpflege in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern“ 62 (2014) (2016), S. 149–181.

29 A. Falk, *Knochengeräte des späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit. Bodenfunde aus Lübeck*, „Zeitschrift des Vereins für Lübeckische Geschichte und Altertumskunde“ 63 (1983), S. 119 f.; B. Wywrot-Wyszkowska, *Rzemiosło...*, S. 143.

Die Verbindung verschiedener Produktionszweige in einer Hand war kein zufälliges Phänomen. Werkstätten mit einem solchen Tätigkeitsprofil gab es das ganze Mittelalter hindurch, und ihre Anwesenheit ist in vielen Städten, auch in den größten, nachgewiesen, die sich durch ihr entwickeltes Handwerk auszeichnen. Ein weiteres Problem ist die Bestimmung des Umfangs dieses Phänomens. Ich bin davon überzeugt, dass sein Ausmaß beträchtlich war, aber ein vollständiges Verständnis des Themas wird durch das Fehlen von Veröffentlichungen erschwert, die umfassende Bearbeitungen der Grabungsergebnisse zur Verfügung stellen.

Die im Ausgrabungsmaterial festgestellten Abfallanhäufungen, die sich aus den unterschiedlichen Produktionstätigkeiten innerhalb einer einzigen Werkstatt ergeben, spiegeln in gewisser Weise die damalige Realität wider, die sich möglicherweise erheblich von derjenigen unterscheidet, die wir anhand der Analyse der schriftlichen Überlieferungen erkennen. Die Realität des Alltags zwang die Handwerker in gewisser Weise zu verschiedenen Tätigkeiten, die nicht immer mit den Bestimmungen der Statuten übereinstimmten, etwa zur Herstellung einer erweiterten Produktpalette, um das Einkommen zu erhöhen, das ihren Lebensunterhalt sicherte. Dies zeigt sich z. B. in den zahlreichen Kompetenzstreitigkeiten zwischen Vertretern verwandter Berufe oder Produktionszweige.³⁰ Auch in verschiedenen Gewerben gab es Handwerker, die sich nicht immer an die Statuten hielten, wie die Bestimmungen in diesen Dokumenten über Strafen für die Nichteinhaltung der Empfehlungen zum Produktionsvolumen oder für andere Verstöße zeigen.³¹ Es sollte auch nicht vergessen werden, dass nicht alle Handwerke Teil einer Zunft waren. Schließlich gab es auch Berufe, die die sog. „freie Kunst“ ausübten.³² Darüber hinaus gab es in jeder größeren Stadt Handwerker, die nicht an Korporationen angeschlossen waren und sich nicht an die Zunftvorschriften halten mussten.³³ Je nach ihren Fähigkeiten und Fertigkeiten konnten sie eine Vielzahl von Produktionstätigkeiten ausführen.

30 M. Bogucka, *Gdańsk jako ośrodek produkcyjny w XIV–XVII wieku*, Warszawa 1962, S. 119, 120, 136, 137.

31 D. Kattinger, *Das Greifswalder Handwerk und seine Organisationen im Spätmittelalter*, in: *Handwerk – Stadt – Hanse...*, S. 84.

32 Th. Hirsch, *Danzings Handels- und Gewerbsgeschichte...*, S. 297; M. Bogucka, *Gdańsk...*, S. 291; J. Wiesiołowski, *Socjotopografia późnośredniowiecznego Poznania*, Poznań 1997², S. 134.

33 M. Bogucka, *Gdańsk...*, S. 300–306.

ABSTRACT

On the identification of crafts in archaeological sources. Problems of interpretation

Among places of production which were uncovered during archaeological excavations workshops in which remains of production, usually of different items, are of special interest. A workshop in which knife sets were produced, iron pots repaired and combs manufactured were uncovered in Kołobrzeg. A workshop in which rosary beads of amber or bone were manufactured and small items were founded was uncovered at Huxstraße 80 in Lübeck. Remains of a similar workshop were found in Stralsund. A workshop in Greifswald specialised in founding garment accessories and production of rosary beads and buttons from bone. It is difficult to identify unanimously in which type of productions the craftsmen who worked in these workshops specialised. It can only be assumed that except for the workshop in Kołobrzeg, it was producers of rosemary who simultaneously founded metal garment accessories who worked in those shops. Dealing with versatile types of production was not an incidental phenomenon. Workshops of such a production profile carried out production throughout the Middle Ages and their presence was noted in many towns, also the biggest ones, which were characterised by developed craftsmanship. Defining the scale of this phenomenon is a different matter. I believe it was quite considerable, however, a full and in-depth research into this problem is hindered by scarcity of publications which would allow a comprehensive study of the results of archaeological excavations.

Key words: late Middle Ages, Baltic towns, craft workshops

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III. BOOK NOTICES

Architektura średniowieczna i archeologia – konteksty [Medieval Architecture and Archaeology – Contexts], Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach, Stały Komitet Mediewistów Polskich, ed. T. Rodzińska-Choraży, Wrocław 2024, Chronicon (= VII Kongres Mediewistów Polskich, 2), 206 pp., paperback.

The presented volume is the second in a series of works stemming from the 7th Congress of Polish Mediaevalists, held from 21 to 23 September 2022 at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Silesia in Katowice. This volume comprises articles addressing topics at the intersection of archaeology and architecture.

The work opens with a brief address by the Congress organiser, followed by an introduction by Teresa Rodzińska-Choraży on the research methodology of early mediaeval architecture. In this, she examines the concepts of interdisciplinarity, multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinary (pp. 9-15). The volume includes nine articles. In the first, Magdalena Młodawska discusses the 19th century origins of mediaeval architectural studies in the Polish lands (pp. 17-25). Aneta Bukowska explores the sources and methodological approaches fundamental to research in architectural archaeology, emphasising that regardless of a structure's state of preservation, form, or period of construction, its analysis necessitates specialised skills. She concludes that historic buildings or their remains discovered through archaeological-architectural work are far from irretrievably lost; instead, as immovable spatial objects, they often become focal points for preservation and display (pp. 27-43). Marta Graczyńska examines Carolingian architecture in Central Europe during the 10th and 11th centuries, focusing on the Church of St Hadrian in Zalavár-Vársziget. She presents it as an example of unique formal solutions and the adaptive use of existing architectural forms to meet local needs, highlighting factors such as the site's function as a royal residence, the growth of pilgrimage, and the establishment of a Benedictine community (pp. 45-59). Teresa Rodzińska-Choraży analyses the early Piast site at Giecz, one of the most significant centres of early Piast Poland, which maintained its importance despite the invasion of Brzetysław (1038/1039).

She notes the continuity of monumental architecture at Giecz from the late 10th century and hypothesises that the stylistic and formal influences of the Giecz church can be traced to Northern Italy (Tuscany, Lombardy, and Veneto). Far from being provincial, the architect responsible for the project was evidently aware of and employing 'fashionable' and widely recognised architectural solutions (pp. 61-101).

Two articles examine research conducted between 2019 and 2021 at the Collegiate Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Wiślica. Andrzej Gołębniak details the organisation of the archaeological research and presents a preliminary analysis of discoveries made during construction work (pp. 103-126). Małgorzata Godek discusses the methodologies and conservation strategies applied during investigations of the Collegiate Church's underground structures. She distinguishes between several aspects: (1) relics of the first Romanesque church (12th century); (2) remains of the second Romanesque church (13th century); (3) other mediaeval architectural elements; and (4) archaeological features, including foundation negatives, horizontal earth surfaces, and materials of natural and cultural origin (pp. 127-149).

Maria Bicz-Suknarowska, Janusz Firlet, and Zbigniew Pianowski present the Romanesque manor house of the Toporczyk-Tęczyński family in Morawica near Kraków (pp. 151-166). Monika Łyczak, Anna Bojęś-Biełasiak, and Monika Kamińska explore the history of Poland's oldest Benedictine abbey, located in Tyniec, in light of recent archaeological and architectural research (pp. 167-183). Finally, Monika Kamińska examines two hall churches with apses and western towers in Jędrzejów and Prandocin (pp. 185-203). The volume concludes with a list of authors.

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Joanna Story, *Charlemagne and Rome. Alcuin and the Epitaph of Pope Hadrian I*, Oxford-New York 2023, Oxford University Press (Medieval History and Archaeology), 91 illustrations, 1 map, 432 pp., List of Manuscript Sources, Bibliography, Index, paperback.

Joanna Story's book focuses on a carved inscription containing a poetic epitaph, most likely composed by the English scholar Alcuin, for Pope Hadrian I (773-795). The inscription was produced shortly after the pope's death and installed in the new oratory of Pope Hadrian's memory in the south transept of St Peter's Basilica in Rome around 796, and was one of the few early

medieval inscriptions to survive the rebuilding of the Constantinian basilica during the Renaissance and later periods.

The author focuses on the power of the material object itself and argues that this lay both in the historical associations of the site and in the meaning of its verses. In its monumental form, Hadrian's epitaph is the product of a creative and intellectually inquisitive milieu born in the established and politically resilient Carolingian monarchy. The epitaph is a testament to the symbiosis between the classical past and the contemporary dynamic world of the creator, suggesting through the text, as well as the embedded cultural associations of its writing, ornamentation, and materials, that Charlemagne was destined not only for a place in the celestial realm, but that he was also the heir to an empire on Earth.

The book opens with an introduction on Charlemagne and his Italic politics. The core of the work then consists of eight chapters: 1. Renaissance Rome: Hadrian's Epitaph in New St Peter's; 2. The 'Life' and Death of Pope Hadrian I; 3. Alcuin and the Epitaph; 4. Recalling Rome: Epigraphic Syllogae and Itineraries; 5. Writing on the Walls: Epigraphy in Italy and Francia; 6. Black Stone: Materials, Methods, and Motives; 7. Aachen and the Art of the Court; 8. Charlemagne, St Peter's, and the Imperial Coronation. The work concludes with a list of manuscripts, a bibliography, and an index.

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Danijel Džino, *Early Medieval Hum and Bosnia, ca. 450–1200. Beyond Myths*, New York-London 2023, Routledge (Studies in Medieval History and Culture), List of Figures, List of Maps, Acknowledgments, List of Abbreviations, Bibliography, Index, 271 pp., paperback.

This book explores the social changes that led to the creation of medieval Hum (future Herzegovina) and Bosnia. The author uses both written and archaeological sources, although the source base for the period studied, *i.e.*, c. 450 to 1200, is limited. The book goes beyond the ideological and national mythologies of the past to provide a new historical narrative that sheds more light on this region located on the borders of both the medieval West and the Byzantine Empire, introducing the latest local historical and archaeological research to a wider English-speaking audience, and contributes to scholarly research on the late antique and early medieval Mediterranean in this very poorly known area. The book is divided into an introduction, eight internally expanded chronological chapters and a conclusion.

The book is intended for an academic audience interested in the history and archaeology of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages, but also for anyone interested in the general history of Herzegovina, Bosnia, Dalmatia, and the Balkans.

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Petr Čornej, *Jan Žižka. Život a doba husitského válečníka* [Jan Žižka, The Life and Times of the Hussite Warrior], Prague 2019, Paseka, 856 pp., English Summary, Personal Index, Place index, Ill., hardback.

In 2019, the 600th anniversary of the outbreak of the Hussite Revolution was commemorated. On this occasion, the latest biography of Jan Žižka, written by Petr Čornej, a renowned Czech medievalist and expert on Hussite themes, was published. The book aims to provide a comprehensive account of the life of one of the central figures of the Hussite Wars in the context of his times. It also includes references to contemporary perspectives, especially Žižka's place in Czech culture and national consciousness. Since the Czech national hero has long attracted the attention of scholars, Čornej summarizes existing research findings and critically analyzes them.

The biography is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter explores the early years of Jan Žižka's life, his tumultuous youth, particularly his career as a bandit and his participation on the Polish side in the Great War of 1409-1411. The alleged presence of Žižka at the Battle of Grunwald is also scrutinized. Readers are then introduced to Žižka's time at the royal court in Prague and the circumstances of that period – Sigismund of Luxembourg's beginnings as Roman King, the development of Jan Hus's preaching, and the events of the Council of Constance.

A substantial portion of the work (Chapters III-VIII) details the Hussite leader's activities during the revolution, linking them to the political and military events in Bohemia. The final section of the publication addresses the perception of the Czech commander over the centuries, particularly by Hussites and Catholics, as well as his portrayal in historical scholarship.

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Lenka Bobková, Mlada Holá, Tomáš Velička, Marius Vinzeler, Jan Zdichynec, *Královská Horní Lužice. Panovnická reprezentace, mechanismy vlády, komunikace* [Royal Upper Lusatia: Monarchic Representation, Mechanisms of Governance, Communication], Praha 2021, Casablanca (= Korunní země v dějinách českého státu, 8), 642 pp., Summaries in German and English, Personal Index, Place Index, Illustrations, hardback.

Upper Lusatia boasts a rich repository of historical sources and an equally extensive historiography, primarily explored by German and Polish researchers. In Czech scholarship, however, this region had not garnered much attention until recently, despite its historical association with the Lands of the Bohemian Crown. The topic of the so-called outer lands of the Bohemian Crown (vedlejší země České koruny) is addressed in this work by a team led by Lenka Bobková, a distinguished medievalist with expertise in Upper Lusatia.

The publication focuses on the functioning of princely and royal authority over the lands along the Lusatian Neisse, the local representation of the ruler, and communication between the sovereign and the inhabitants of the region during the Middle Ages and the early modern period. The timeframe spans from the beginnings of Přemyslid rule over Lusatia at the end of the 11th century (with occasional references to earlier history from the 9th-11th centuries) to 1635, when Upper Lusatia came under Saxon rule.

The book is structured into five chapters, each addressing a specific aspect of Bohemian rule over Upper Lusatia during its history. The first chapter outlines the region's fate under Czech rulers and during the reign of the Ascanian dynasty, as well as the turmoil following the extinction of the Luxembourg dynasty. The second part focuses on the personal representation of the monarch in the region, divided into two periods: up to 1526 and the years 1526-1635. Key topics include royal visits and the so-called homage journeys (holdovací cesty).

The third chapter examines royal administration in Upper Lusatia and the functioning of local offices. The fourth section deals with documentation and communication, with the narrative centred on correspondence, the chancery of the country bailiff, and the communication network of Görlitz. The final chapter, titled The Visual Presence of the Absent (vizuální přítomnost nepřítomného), explores visible traces of rulers in Upper Lusatia, such as locations, artistic depictions of monarchs, and symbols found in architecture and decorative art.

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Piotr Strzyż, *Lipany 1434*, Łódź 2021, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, 168 pp., Source Appendix, ill., paperback.

The Battle of Lipany, a significant event in the history of Bohemia and the Hussite Wars, is the subject of this publication. It also serves as a supplement to Polish historiography on Hussitism, where topics related to the military art of the Hussites still receive limited attention in Poland. This is surprising given that the military aspects of the Hussite Revolution have garnered substantial focus from military historians, a point emphasized by the author. Above all, the book provides a panoramic perspective, covering not only the battle itself but also its historical background and military issues.

The work consists of an introduction, seven chapters, and a source appendix. The first part presents the historical background of events, specifically the years 1431-1434. This section focuses on the course of the fifth anti-Hussite crusade, the Battle of Domažlice, negotiations during the Council of Basel, and the siege of Pilsen, culminating in the events leading up to the Battle of Lipany.

The next two chapters delve deeply into military matters, attempting to determine whether Hussite warfare represented a revolution or an anachronism. These considerations include Hussite organization, armament, tactics, mobilization capabilities of the conflicting parties, and the use of the war wagon, which forms the basis for this judgment.

The following two sections detail the deployment of troops and the course of the battle, while the penultimate chapter examines the modern appearance of the battlefield, dedicating considerable attention to the burial site of Prokop the Great. The final part of the narrative addresses the aftermath of the Hussite Revolution, from Lipany to the Compact of Jihlava in 1437 (the original Czech name, Jihlava, is used in the work).

The book is complemented by an appendix consisting of 11 translated source texts related to the Battle of Lipany, presented in Polish.

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Migracje elit rycerskich i szlacheckich w średniowieczu w Polsce i krajach ościennych [Migrations of knightly and noble elites in the Middle Ages in Poland and neighbouring countries], Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach, Stały Komitet Mediewistów Polskich, ed. J. Sperka, S. Szybkowski, Wrocław 2024, Chronicon (= VII Kongres Mediewistów Polskich, 3), 196 pp., paperback.

The collective volume presented here is the third in a series of papers resulting from panel discussions during the 7th Congress of Polish Mediaevalists, held from 21 to 23 September 2022 at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Silesia in Katowice. The volume comprises nine articles, seven in Polish and two in Ukrainian, addressing the theme of elite migration in Central and Eastern Europe during the Middle Ages. The articles are preceded by a brief preface from the Congress organisers and an introduction.

In the opening article, Myroslav Voloshchuk examines the use of the name Vladimir as an example to explore naming practices within the dynastic and non-dynastic elites of Piast Poland and the Rurykovich dynasty during the 12th and 13th centuries (pp. 13-22). Marek Smoliński discusses the migration of knights, primarily from neighbouring regions, to the Duchy of East Pomerania from the 13th century until 1308/1309 (pp. 23-48). Jerzy Rajman analyses the houses and estates in Kraków belonging to nobles holding state offices up to the end of the 14th century (pp. 49-75). Sobiesław Szybkowski examines the phenomenon of newcomer 'others' who were granted royal appointments to land offices, including the highest offices conferring the right to participate in the Crown Council. His focus is on the land hierarchies of Broad Wielkopolska, encompassing the provinces of Poznań, Kalisz, Kujawy, Sieradz, Łęczyca, and Dobrzyń (pp. 77-99). Maciej Woźny explores knightly migrations to the lands of the Duchy of Opole between the late 13th and late 15th centuries (pp. 101-111). Dariusz Wróbel addresses the late mediaeval migrations of knights and nobility to the Lublin Land, noting that for many, this was merely a transitional stage before moving on to the Ruthenian lands of the Crown (pp. 113-139). Yuriy Zazuliak uses the example of Lviv castellan Jerzy Strumyło and the Łagodowski family to illustrate the formation of clientelistic relationships between the Ruthenian nobility and incoming Polish knights in the Crown's Ruthenian territories during the 15th century (pp. 141-164). Waław Gojniczek investigates internal migration within the lands of the Bohemian Crown, focusing on Jan the Elder of Żerotín, a Moravian magnate who owned estates in Fulnek, Upper Silesia, from 1477 to 1498. These estates were acquired through a pledge from King Matthias Corvinus of Hungary and Bohemia (pp. 165-178). The volume concludes with

an article by Bogusław Czechowicz, who discusses the property expansion of Bohemian and Moravian magnates in Silesia at the turn of the 15th and 16th centuries (pp. 179-193). The work closes with a list of contributors.

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Konstantyn Porfirogeneta, *O zarządzaniu cesarstwem* [Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *De administrando imperio*], przełożył, wstępem i przypisami opatrzył Aleksander Paroń, Instytut Archeologii i Etnologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Instytut Studiów Klasycznych, Śródziemnomorskich i Orientalnych Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław-Warszawa 2024, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Sub Lupa (Biblioteka Antyczna, t. 73), 298 pp., Maps 6, General Index, Bibliography, hardcover.

The book contains the first complete Polish translation of *De administrando imperio* from the Greek original of the work, based on the edition by Gy. Morawcsik (1967). The authorship of the piece is traditionally attributed to Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus (905-959), although the emperor's participation in its creation consisted mainly in inspiring the writing of the work and supervising it. The text is a valuable testimony to the history of Byzantium in the tenth century, to an insight into the ways in which external politics, diplomacy and state governance were conducted. It gives expression to the political aspirations of the Empire's elite at the time.

Aleksander Paroń's translation is equipped with a solid introduction, a list of abbreviations and a bibliography, and extensive comments in the footnotes to the text of the translation. In addition, a glossary of Byzantine terms prepared by the author, as well as a geographical, ethnic, and personal name index and maps prove helpful in reading. The publication of the translation of *De administrando imperio* provides an important impulse for the development and popularisation of Byzantine studies in Poland.

STANISŁAW ROSIK

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Christian Raffensperger, *Rulers and Rulership in the Arc of Medieval Europe, 1000-1200*, New York-London 2023, Routledge, 310 pp., Bibliography, Index, paperback.

The book addresses the issue of supreme power (royal, princely or grand-ducal power etc.) in the 'arc of medieval Europe', which the author frames in terms of ruler and rulership rather than king/queen and kingship/queen-ship. The dominant conception of monarchy and kingship in historiography is rejected in favour of a broad definition of rulership. Thus, the Author attempts to provide a conceptual framework for perceiving and understanding the system of power in the Middle Ages.

The author, noting that previous work on 'medieval Europe' is mainly concerned with the West and especially with the Latin script world, bases his argument on as wide a geographical scope as possible, using the concept of the 'arc of medieval Europe', representing most of the physical space of Europe. Hence the attempt to capture models of governance in Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland, as well as Norway, the Balkans, Russia, and Iberia.

The author moves along three research axes, which has been taken into account in the division of the book's content. Part I, with three chapters, covers three specific areas: titulature, co-ownership, and succession. Part II, consisting of two chapters, deals with ecclesiastical relations, a topic that no one writing about medieval rulership can do without, given the great importance of Christianity for the rulers of Christian Europe. The author deals with two fields of research, *i.e.*, the relationship between rulers and the Church and the monastic legitimation of rulership. Part III deals with the idea of the decentralisation of power. It consists of one chapter, divided into three research areas containing topics such as (1) Weak Power Polities; (2) Claims-making and (3) Central Places and Itinerant Rulership.

The explicit aim of the author of the work is to identify additional examples related to the idea of ruler and rulership from different areas of medieval Europe, which do not, or rarely, appear in the existing, Western-centric, historiography. The work is crowned with a conclusion and complemented by an extensive bibliography.

TOMASZ PELECH

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Nikoloz Aleksidze, *Sanctity, Gender, and Authority in Medieval Caucasia*, Edinburgh 2024, Edinburgh University Press, 360 pp., 17 black and white ill., 4 black and white line art, paperback.

The book *Sanctity, Gender, and Authority in Medieval Caucasia* by Nikoloz Aleksidze presents an innovative approach to the cult of saints and its various aspects, illustrating its transformations in a political context. The historian, using diverse Georgian, Armenian, Byzantine, and Russian sources, develops a conceptual framework situated at the intersection of three phenomena: sanctity, gender, and politics. In his research, the author enriches his work with Georgian and Russian literature. This work is a valuable resource for those interested in the history of religion and political thought in medieval Georgia and the South Caucasus.

The book consists of an introduction, three parts divided into nine chapters, and concludes with final remarks and a bibliography. The first part describes the Late Antiquity period in the South Caucasus, during which the first political entities – Armenia, Iberia (Kartli), Lazica (Egrisi), and Caucasian Albania – were Christianized in the 4th and 5th centuries. The first chapter focuses on the relics of saints incorporated into the rhetoric of royal legitimization in Armenia, Georgia, and Caucasian Albania, emphasizing their political value. This discussion continues in the next chapter, where the author addresses the issue of female identity and its ambiguous role through the cult of Saint Nino. Subsequently, the historian elaborates on the cult of Queen Shushanik and its significance in both the political and sacred spheres. Queen Shushanik is analyzed within the framework of anthropological structuralism, particularly in the contexts of “gift-giving” and “woman as a gift.”

The second part of the book is dedicated to the medieval unified history of Georgia under the rule of the Bagratid dynasty. The fourth chapter illustrates the ideology of the Bagratid dynasty and the new cult model they introduced, which aimed to masculinize the patrons of Georgia. The subsequent chapter focuses on the political cult of Theotokos (Mother of God), which emerged as an expression of linguistic, ecclesiastical, and territorial unity under the Bagratid dynasty, becoming a key element of Georgian identity. The sixth chapter explores the cult of Queen Tamar in detail and its evolution. Furthermore, the cults of Saint Nino and the Mother of God were reinforced during her reign, contributing to the extension of her authority.

The final part of the book examines the reception of Late Antique and medieval concepts of sanctity and their political significance, covering the period from the collapse of the Georgian monarchy in the 15th century to modern times. The seventh chapter provides insights into the cult

of Queen Ketevan, who was brutally murdered by the Safavids for refusing to renounce Christianity and convert to Islam. The historian further explores the Russian Empire's policies toward Georgian relics, highlighting their use for political purposes. Additionally, the author points out the feminization of Georgia's image in Russian literature, even before its final annexation. The penultimate chapter delves into the re-examination of medieval Georgian narratives about saints and their nationalization process. The author discusses Ilia Chavchavadze's efforts to renew the memory of King David IV the Builder, Saint Nino, and Queen Tamar, presenting them as national symbols. The final chapter demonstrates the reintegration of the cult of saints into contemporary political rhetoric. The book concludes with a summary in which the historian synthesizes the main themes of his work.

The book under discussion is a compelling academic work that clearly and thoroughly addresses the cult of saints and its impact on ideology and culture. N. Aleksidze's latest work is a valuable scholarly contribution for both researchers and readers interested in the region.

MARIAM KOLBAIA

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Helen J. Nicholson, *Sybil, Queen of Jerusalem, 1186–1190*, Abingdon-New York 2022, Routledge (Rulers of the Latin East), XIII + 203 pp., paperback.

In her work, Helen J. Nicholson (Cardiff University) aims to construct a biographical portrait of Queen Sybil of Jerusalem, the daughter of King Amaury and sister to Baldwin IV. To achieve this, Nicholson presents a nuanced depiction of the political landscape in Outremer during Sybil's lifetime. She challenges traditional historiographical perspectives on the conflicts surrounding Sybil, offering a reinterpretation of events during Baldwin IV's reign. This reinterpretation is grounded in a critical reassessment of the narratives provided by William of Tyre's *Chronicle* and the *Chronicle of Ernoul*. Despite the challenges posed by the limited source material directly referencing Sybil, Nicholson successfully reconstructs her life and motivations within the broader political struggles of the 1180s Kingdom of Jerusalem.

The book is structured into eight chapters. The introductory chapter provides the historical context of the Crusader States, discusses the sources for Sybil's life and reign, and summarizes modern perceptions of her legacy. The subsequent seven chapters chronologically examine different stages of Sybil's life.

The second chapter (1159-1171) explores Sybil's childhood, focusing on her birth, her legal status following her parents' divorce, and her potential upbringing by her godmother, Sybil of Flanders, at the Abbey of Saint Lazarus in Bethany. Nicholson supports this thesis by drawing parallels with the education of other noblewomen in Europe. The chapter concludes with an analysis of Sybil's betrothal to Stephen of Sancerre and the failure of the associated marriage negotiations.

The third chapter (1171-1177) delves into the political dynamics during Baldwin IV's minority and the regency of Raymond of Tripoli. It also examines Sybil's marriage to William Longsword and her subsequent titles as Countess of Jaffa and Ascalon. The fourth chapter (1177-1180) addresses Sybil's widowhood after William's death, the negotiations for her second marriage, and her eventual marriage to Guy of Lusignan. Nicholson explores the failed negotiations with potential suitors such as Philip, Count of Flanders, and Hugh, Duke of Burgundy, and discusses the circumstances surrounding her swift marriage to Guy.

The fifth chapter (1180-1186) highlights Sybil's increasing political significance, particularly during the conflicts between her husband, Guy, and Baldwin IV. It also covers the succession crisis following Baldwin IV's death, which saw Sybil's son, Baldwin V, crowned as king. Sybil's influence reaches its peak in the sixth chapter (1186-1187), which portrays her as Queen of Jerusalem. During this period, she controversially crowned Guy as king, a move Nicholson partially corroborates based on medieval sources.

Chapter seven (1187) focuses on the aftermath of the Battle of Hattin, Sybil's actions during Guy's imprisonment, and Saladin's invasion of the kingdom. Particular attention is given to the defence of Ascalon and the negotiations leading to Guy's release. Nicholson argues that Sybil's decision to surrender the city was not only an act of loyalty but also a calculated strategic move.

The eighth and final chapter examines the last years of Sybil's life, including the political conflict surrounding Conrad of Montferrat, preparations for the Third Crusade, and the siege of Acre, during which Sybil passed away. The chapter concludes with an analysis of Sybil's historical reputation, noting that while she was often praised for her devotion to Guy, her political acumen and impact have been largely underestimated.

Nicholson successfully achieves her goal of reimagining Sybil's personal actions and her role in the political events of her time. Through an analysis of narrative sources and charters issued by Sybil as both queen and countess, the work situates Sybil within the broader context of female rulers of the era. Furthermore, the book provides a fresh perspective on the political dynamics and conflicts among the Franks in Outremer during Sybil's life.

SZYMON KAMLER

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Jolanta M. Marszalska, Waldemar Graczyk, *The Lost Collection of Incunabula of the Seminary Library in Płock*, transl. Elżbieta Orzechowska, Warszawa 2023, National Library of Poland, 352 pp., hardback.

The aim of the study under discussion is to present a highly valuable collection of books compiled in the 15th century in the church environment, namely more than 400 incunabula, gathered in the Library of the Seminary in Płock up to the 1930s. This collection - along with some 80 medieval manuscript codices - was lost during the German occupation of Poland during World War II (it was taken to Königsberg in 1941 and its further fate is unknown; barely two codices from the 12th and 13th centuries returned to Płock). The study discussed here is based on archival sources, and of fundamental importance in this case is the repertory compiled by Kazimierz Piekarski on the basis of queries in the 1930s, stored in the National Library in Warsaw, and entitled *Inkunabuły Biblioteki Seminarium Duchownego w Płocku. Rejestracja Kazimierza Piekarskiego sprzed 1 IX 1939* [Incunabula of the Library of the Seminary in Płock. Registration of Kazimierz Piekarski before 1 September 1939].

The main part of the publication is an alphabetical catalogue of incunabula (authors or titles of works) (pp. 49-245), supplemented by a list of post-incunabula (pp. 247-253). It is preceded by an introduction (pp. 7-45) informing about the state of research on the lost book collection and the sources for its reconstruction, and further on about the contents and the first creators of the collection, including Piotr Lubart, Bishop of Płock (d. 1522), Piotr Dunin-Wolski, Bishop of Płock (d. 1590) and Wawrzyniec Goślicki, Bishop of Poznań (d. 1607), and its history until the 19th and 20th centuries. It also discusses the methodology used to compile the catalogue and the following sections: an index of the origin of the books, a short list of annotations to incunabula, a list of abbreviations of scholarly studies, an index of places where incunabula were printed (cities and publishing houses), concordance of data in the catalogue, and an index of printers, booksellers and book donors with reference to localities.

The work in question thus provides a comprehensive presentation and study of a lost collection of books created up to the end of the 15th century, providing important insights into not only the history of the book, but also the intellectual culture of the clergy of the Diocese of Płock at the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern era.

Wielokulturowość średniowiecza. Ludzie i idee [Multiculturalism of the Middle Ages. People and ideas], Instytut Historii Uniwersytetu Śląskiego w Katowicach, Stały Komitet Mediewistów Polskich, ed. J. Sperka, Wrocław 2024, Chronicon (= VII Kongres Mediewistów Polskich, 1), 116 pp., paperback.

The presented publication is the first in a series of works arising from the 7th Congress of Polish Mediaevalists, which took place from 21 to 23 September 2022 at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Silesia in Katowice. As noted by the organisers, the Congress's theme, "The Multiculturalism of the Middle Ages: People and Ideas", was deliberately chosen to reflect the historical cultural diversity of the communities that have inhabited Upper Silesia since the Middle Ages and continue to do so. This volume serves as both an introduction to and a record of the event. Accordingly, alongside the preface and four articles, it includes elements such as a description of the event (*Stolica polskiej mediewistyki 2022: Katowice. Słowo wdzięczności* [The Capital of Polish Mediaeval Studies 2022: Katowice. A Word of Gratitude]), a list of sections held during the Congress, and a photo report. The scholarly section opens with an article by Krzysztof Ożóg, exploring the multiculturalism of students and masters at the mediaeval university, with a particular focus on Kraków (pp. 15-31). This is followed by Anna Sochacka's reflections on the transmission of elements of Eastern Christian culture to the West, using the region of Lublin as a case study. Her analysis concludes that this process was heavily influenced by political arrangements and ecclesiastical divisions (pp. 33-57). Stanisław Rosik examines the case of the Pomeranians and their conversion in light of the hagiography of St Otto of Bamberg (12th century), highlighting the process of "debarbarisation". He notes that, in these narratives, the formerly "barbarian" peoples who were integrated into the community of *Christianitas* do not appear as culturally or behaviourally distinct as might be implied by the fundamental association of barbarism with otherness and strangeness (pp. 59-74). Lastly, Jerzy Sperka presents the political history of the Duchy of Racibórz, focusing on the individual rulers of Racibórz during the late Middle Ages. The article concludes with a genealogical tree of the Piast and Přemyslid dynasties of Racibórz, included as an appendix to complement the discussion (pp. 77-101).

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Żywoty św. Ottona z Bambergu [*Lives of St Otto of Bamberg*], transl. Stanisław Rosik, Wrocław 2024, Instytut Historyczny Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Pracownia Badań nad Wczesnymi Dziejami Europy Środkowej, 2nd ed., 359 pp., Bibliography, Index of Geographical and Ethnic Names, Personal Index, paperback.

The book is the second edition of the first translation into Polish of the complete lives of Saint Otto of Bamberg written in the 12th century (the first edition was 2020). It is the result of work undertaken as part of an international research project within the framework of the National Programme for the Development of Humanities (2014-2020), entitled *Poland and Pomerania in Shaping European Civilisation: From the Era of Slavic Tribes to the Turn of the 13th Century*. It is a translation of the triptych on the life of St Otto of Bamberg (c. 1060-1139), known as the Apostle of Pomerania. The work comprises: (1) *The Life of Saint Otto of Bamberg* by an anonymous Benedictine monk from Prüfening near Regensburg; (2) *The Life of Saint Otto of Bamberg* by Ebon of Michelsberg (d. 1163); (3) *A Dialogue on the Life of Saint Otto of Bamberg* by Herbord (d. 1167). The texts are arranged in chronological order and are preceded by an introduction, a bibliography on the subject, as well as editorial and translator's notes. This work takes a closer look at the image created in socio-cultural memory of the life and achievements of one of the most prominent church hierarchs of the 12th century. It highlights his activities as a reformer and fund-raiser for monastic circles, as well as the role in the Christianisation of Pomerania and the incorporation of the region and its peoples into *Christianitas*.

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