

## REVIEWS

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Hanna Zaremska, *Żydzi w średniowiecznej Polsce. Gmina krakowska* [The Jewry in the Medieval Poland: The Community of Cracow], Warszawa, 2011, Instytut Historii PAN, 551 pp., bibliog., maps, ill., English sum.

In spite of its voluminous size, Hanna Zaremska's most recent work is not meant to be a complete monograph on the subject-matters heralded by its title. It is rather a collection of studies on two monographic, and strongly interrelated, issues, along whose lines the contents is split into two sections. The first (running ten chapters) presents the key issues related to the history of Jews in medieval Poland, while the second discusses the problems directly pertaining to the religious community of Cracow, the capital town of the Poland of yore (eight chapters in total). Some of these studies, or parts thereof, were separately issued in print during the work done on the book for more than ten years. This has enabled the author to modify or redevelop the content already made part of the scholarly circulation. The specific structure of the book's content enables us to deduce why the author has quit a conclusion, or a final summary.

It is the author's concept that the book is targeted at a group broader than medievalists or experts in Jewish culture. Still, problems usual to the content of a specialist scholarly dissertation are present (i.e. interpretation of the source texts, polemics with related historiography). This outcome is achieved through a transparent narration, use of a language that is plain to any reader, and inclusion of a broad introductory chapter which introduces the reader into the techniques applied by historians of medieval Polish Jewry. These measures are primarily typical, in the Polish reader's perception, to translations from English-language literature. This method of discourse is still rare to Polish historiography, which instead prefers hermetic forms; therefore, the new book by H. Zaremska is potentially comparable with Benedykt Zientara's immortal work on Duke Henry I the Bearded – *Henryk Brodaty i jego czas* [Henry the Bearded and His Time] (1975).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This author has already managed to present her research outcomes in an approachable manner in the treatises: *Niegodne rzemiosło. Kat w społeczeństwie Polski XIV–XVI w.* (1986) and *Banicy w średniowiecznej Europie* (1993).

The aforesaid initial chapter bears a rather unusual title: 'Jak pisałam historię Żydów w średniowiecznej Polsce' [How I wrote my history of Jews in the medieval Poland] (the Polish translation of Moshe Rosman's *How Jewish is Jewish History*, also published in 2011, was – perhaps not coincidentally – titled *Jak pisać historię żydowską?* [How to write a Jewish history?]<sup>2</sup>). Owing to this chapter's content-related load (and leaving aside the broadly discussed threads of the author's personal experiences), it cannot be regarded merely as an introduction presenting the existing state of research, and paying homage to the works of those who have pioneered the study of the earliest history of Polish Jewry: Majer Bałaban (1877–1942), Mojżesz Schorr (1874–1941) and Ignacy Schiper (Yitzhak Schipper, 1884–1943). What the chapter in question moreover offers is a lecture on the language and literacy of the medieval Jews, and thus, on the determinants that shaped the body of sources generated in the Ashkenazi Diaspora cultural circle. A survey is also presented of these sources and materials, produced as they were by Christian environment but with a Jewish contribution; this is combined with the most recent research findings of relevance, and with observations disclosing these sources' imminent informative potential, not completely taken advantage of by this far.

Let us just mention the dating of a gloss in a fifteenth-century Cracow prayer-book, comprising a prayer for King Casimir IV Jagiellon and his sons, which was enabled owing to the development of Hebrew palaeography; or, the presentation of notes made in the Hebrew alphabet (containing some Polish words) in a fifteenth-century land register of Warsaw, written in Latin; or, the focus on Cracow community elders' signatures made in their own hand on a 1485 document of theirs. A key remark ought to be made at this point: with the death of the aforementioned historians, who belonged to the world of Polish Jews buried in the Holocaust time, and the resultant broken cultural continuity, there appeared a dramatic deficit of medievalist scholars active in Poland and capable of combining a classical technique of Middle-Ages historians, based on interpreting sources produced within the Christian/Latin civilisation circle, with a more in-depth knowledge of the culture (religion, customs, mentality, language, type and alphabet) of the Jewish Diaspora. The most recent works, particularly the ones by Hanna Zaremska, have proved that this state of affairs has at last been rectified. Through a broadening of the stock of the sources used, and through inclusion of monuments created by Jews themselves, which are becoming better and better known to us – the present book being yet another such instance – we have gained a thorough progress compared to the state of research which has by this far been fundamentally set by the findings of Roman Grodecki (1889–1964), comprised in his small-sized elemental dissertation titled 'Dzieje

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<sup>2</sup> Originally published in 2007.

Żydów w Polsce do końca XIV w.' [The history of Jews in Poland till the end of fourteenth century].<sup>3</sup>

An actual introduction to the studies on Jewry in Poland is the chapter titled 'Geografia żydowska' [Jewish geography], where the reader follows a route from Patriarch Abraham's time to the distribution of the Diaspora in the Middle Ages, learning about the directions and chronology of those migrations – in other words, a general-history background. The argument is expectedly centred around the Ashkenazi Jewry (i.e. those inhabiting the Rhineland, Flanders, north-east of France and England in the early Middle Ages), as a group out of which the author derives the Israelites settling from around eleventh century onwards in the Polish lands. Those settlers are seen as forming a larger whole with those who settled in the neighbouring countries; hence the title of the next chapter, 'Żydzi we wczesnośredniowiecznej Europie Środkowej' [Jews in the early-medieval Central Europe]. Such combined approach is implied by the scarce source accounts concerning migrations to each of the region's countries separately as well as by a conviction whereby the Diasporas in each of Bohemia, Poland and Hungary were similar to, and interrelated with, one another. In the early Middle Ages (especially, tenth to eleventh century, which coincided with the development of local monarchies), these countries formed a homogenous area of penetration of Jewish merchants trading between the Abbasid Caliphate, Western Europe, and Byzantium. The conviction that the Jews have been through a shared history across the three said monarchies of the Central Europe (which from a Polish standpoint would usually extend to Austria and east of Germany) is reinforced through the evidence offered by the almost identical privileges or charters granted to them by the Bohemian and Hungarian rulers plus by a Polish duke within just a few years around mid-thirteenth century (following an Austrian model). From tenth century onward, a section of the busiest route used by Jewish slave traders, linking Prague and Kiev, was set through the southern lands of Poland. It was along that route and other far-reaching trade routes that the first Central-European Jewish settlers moved. In spite of a well-documented and earlier-dated appearance of Jews in Central Europe, in Khazaria and Ruthenia, the starting points of those settlers' migrations tend to be identified today in the West, while the former hypotheses advocating eastern or southern origins of first Mosaic believers living in Poland are being rejected.

The relatively best-researched history of the region's major Jewish cluster, the one of Prague, provides indications as to the status of newcomer settlers within the system of so-called ducal law that was governing the local pat-

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<sup>3</sup> Written in 1936/7, published in *idem, Polska piastowska*, ed. Jerzy Wyrozumski (Warsaw, 1969). Zaremska does not highlight this particular work compared to those authored by the Jewish historians.

rimonial monarchies. While enjoying personal freedom, their property was owned by the ruler – with any advantageous and disadvantageous effects of it (protection and forfeiture, respectively). The Prague case also confirms that along with trading activities, the Jews were pursuing lending operations, from as early as the outset of twelfth century on. Jewish experts were used in the service of the royal treasury. Also, there was a relation between pogroms accompanying the progress of First Crusade participants and the direction of Jewish migration – from the affected Bohemia area to Poland and Hungary. An important element defining the specific ways in which the Jews' skills were used in monetary policy was the appearance in twelfth century across the region (mostly in Poland) of local releases of coins bearing Hebrew inscriptions. It is not the coins, however, that chiefly attract the author's attention (they have been dealt with a great deal by Polish historiography and numismatics): instead, Zaremska – following her predecessors from a century ago – highlights the responses as an original Jewish source that documents the contacts maintained in eleventh-twelfth century by peripheral Central-European communities with recognised Diaspora authorities in the West. It is in responses that we come across certain unique details of the daily life in Przemyśl and Cracow, along with evidence of the appearance of first local scholars.

The fourth chapter is titled 'Wiek XIII – migracje i statut Bolesława Pobożnego dla Żydów z 1264 roku' [Thirteenth century: migrations and Duke Boleslav the Pious' statute for Jews, 1264], pointing to the said century as a turning point in the development of Central-European settlement. Jewish population must indeed have appeared in dozens of new places in conjunction with inflows of colonists from Germany, which implied accelerated urbanisation. In Poland, these related occurrences were most clearly evident in Silesia, the province that was undergoing in thirteenth century the fastest and deepest population-related and cultural economic transition; Silesian towns, newly set-up or reformed under the German law, were the settling locations for numerous hubs of Jews. The then-existing centres of ducal authority and long-distance trade consequently ceased being the only settlement locations for the new-arrivals.

In line with the legacy historiographic tenor, Zaremska focuses in her continued narrative on the first charter awarded to Polish Jews, i.e. the statute granted in 1264, in Kalisz, by Boleslav the Pious, duke of Greater Poland: 'This [piece of] legislation, endorsed by King Casimir III the Great and the subsequent rulers ..., was to act over the centuries as the primary regulation of the Jewish status in this country' (p. 116). As is emphasised in this chapter, the Jews in the Polish kingdom territory were not subject to the municipal jurisdiction – in line with the Kalisz Statute, while being subordinate to the ruler and retaining a quasi-estate-related legal separation. Such was the difference between the relations in Poland and the system taking

shape in the German Reich and in the lands detached from the Kingdom of Poland (Pomerania, Silesia) where the rulers ceded their jurisdiction and authority over the Jews (not in each case completely, let us add) to relevant municipal bodies. The former ducal law system, collapsed in twelfth century, was replaced by the Piast rulers with novel instruments reinforcing the ruler's authority, following the German patterns. One of the many such instruments, the Jewish *regale*, occurred to be extremely persistent in Poland. Interestingly, although the *servi camerae*, a borrowed concept of the Jewry's status, had no doubt been known and applied locally since the late twelfth/early thirteenth century, it was only in fifteenth century that the said phrase came into use.

Chapter five: 'Przywileje Kazimierza Wielkiego dla Żydów i ich średnio-wieczne konfirmacje' [Casimir the Great's privileges for Jews and their medieval confirmations] logically follows up the subject-matter brought out. The tradition, perhaps dating back to a late medieval period, has namely marginalised the figure of Boleslav the Pious, making King Casimir the Great the first and greatest benefactor of Polish Jewry. It was indeed the charters issued by this king in 1334, 1364 and 1367 (all of which confirmed an earlier privilege) that modern-era monarchs approved of, till the First Commonwealth ceased existing. The study under discussion, setting in an order a complex knowledge on the legislative activity pursued with respect to the Jews by the last Piast on the Polish throne, should be recognised as its author's great research achievement. I should not hesitate to call it critical to the history of recognition and, firstly, the method of readable and clear exhibition of the issue in question (which extends in this case to the controversy around a mid-fifteenth-century debunk of the authenticity of a deed allegedly issued by King Casimir).

The following chapter, titled 'Żydzi w społeczeństwie miejskim' [Jews in the urban society], reminds us of the basic context in which conglomerations of Jewish people functioned, and which cannot by any means be lost sight of whenever expatiating the formal legal conditions and determinants. Consents for Jewish comers from abroad to settle in a town were granted by rulers on individual basis. According to Zaremska, it might have possibly been forced by instances of local Jewish communities opposing against accepting competitors in their 'own' area. Moving within the country was conditioned by residence consents issued by Jewish community elders who ignored the municipal authorities' views in this respect. As Zaremska puts it (p. 181),

Jewish contributions to a town's economy ... were raised by historiographers mainly in the context of tensions between Christians and Israelites. An outcome of such depiction is a quite common conviction whereby hostility toward Judaist believers has resulted from economic competition related to the development of the Christian bourgeoisie, with Jews losing their position of an indispensable element of urban economy.

As she remarks, the determination of the function of Jews in the economy calls for being verified – and research on this matter should be clear of any stereotypes. The 1264 charter did not lay down any clear limitations to lending or trade operations; its subsequent confirmations, as stressed by Zaremska, testify that at least till mid-fifteenth century there was no opposition from the nobility or bourgeoisie. It was only in the 1480s that a number of cities banned retail trade to Jews. Lending activity, in turn, did not come across heavy resistance, apart from the Church protesting against it. The author believes that the restriction of Jewish retail trade imposed since the 1480s was merely applied in line with the postulate of classifying Jews, in the interest of local tradesmen, as ‘alien merchants’ – eclipsed, as a standard, only allowed to trade at fairs, and subject to the staples. This marked a thorough breakthrough in the attitude toward the status of Jews as those not subject to the municipal laws. An emphasis put on this coordinated action of cities is intended as evidence of misconceived assumptions prevalent to date in the historiography which, while displaying the role of Jewish usury, tended to erroneously marginalise the significance of Jewish trade in the late medieval period.

Owing to its non-veiled presentation of the matter in question, the following chapter – ‘Żydzi w sądzie: przestępczość żydowska’ [Jews at court: Jewish crime] – is pioneering in the Polish medieval studies on Mosaic people (beside the same author’s earlier study on the ‘thing stolen’ in the Jewish pledge system<sup>4</sup>). A reference to the legacy literature investigating into the Jewish vow unfolds as a study on the issue, providing new detailed findings. Examples of judicial tactics applied by the suing parties, so irresistibly described in this chapter, will attract the attention of even a most bored reader.

The specificity of Jewish crime was owed, in the author’s concept, to fencing of stolen property (consciously taking such property on a pledge) and counterfeiting of currency; thus, the related stereotypes are reaffirmed, be it to some extent. The research done by Marcin Kamler on the crime in Polish cities in the early modern era (cf. *Świat przestępczy w Polsce XVI i XVII stulecia* [The criminal world in Poland in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries], 1991) has indicated a 65 per cent share of the Jewish element in the ‘fence’ (*resp.* accessory-after-the-fact) milieu. The awareness that the stolen objects would inevitably go to Jewish usurers’ depots eventually yielded the launch in 1453 of a country-specific procedure whereby the crime victim requested the Jewish-school elder for searching the stolen goods. While Jewish ‘fencing’ practice remained unpunished in the Polish legal praxis (which could actually have propelled the phenomenon), the monetary crime – regardless of who the

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<sup>4</sup> Hanna Zaremska, ‘Rzecz skradziona w żydowskim zastawie’, in Stanisław Bylina *et al.* (eds.), *Kościół, kultura, społeczeństwo. Studia z dziejów średniowiecza i czasów nowożytnych* (Warsaw, 2000), 337–51.

perpetrator was – had the status of crime liable to severest punishment. The fifteenth-century centres of mass production of counterfeit Polish currency were located outside the Kingdom's limits, and the participation of Jews in those fraudulent dealings was limited to a meticulous distribution of the fakes. There is no reason to suspect that the scale of these dealings was any larger than for Christian entrepreneurs trading in money.

In Chapter Eight of the first section of her book, Hanna Zaremska asks an important question: 'How many Jews lived in the medieval Poland?', and she does not disillusion the reader by evading a precise answer. The argument's burden is placed here not so much on a critical review of the calculation methods applied by the earlier authors and of the source base they had used, but to a larger extent on an attempt at defining the number of Jewish clusters and populations of at least some of them (following the reference literature). This has allowed the author to assume a new position toward the data obtainable from fiscal sources, only partly made use of by this far (the author has clearly broadened their selection). In conclusion, following certain publications on Germany, the researcher accepts that a mean fifteenth-century Jewish colony would only consist of one to two families; the only three large agglomerations: Lvov, Poznań and Cracow had 500 to 800 people each. In aggregate, it is certain that Jews accounted for less than one per cent of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's population at the outset of the modern era. Let me add that this ought to make us all the more aware of the scale of the demographic processes taking place in the following centuries and culminating in the eighteenth century when the Jewish population was estimated at hundreds of thousands, its share in the total Commonwealth population amounting to a few percent.

The next chapter, a study titled 'Długosz i Żydzi' [Długosz and the Jews], is primarily an original analysis of the part of the content of the monumental chronicle written in 1455–80 by the Cracow canon Jan Długosz (1415–80), being of special interest to Zaremska. Jan Długosz's outstanding synthetic account, the first such in Polish historiography, is unique also due to the fact that it refers to Jewish matters through as many as several dozen mentions. It is not so much a reflection of the chronicler's own obsessions as of the attitude toward the Jewish issue expressed in the Cracow University and clergy milieus associated with the royal court. The source material offers a prevalently severe evaluation of the monarchal policies: for Długosz, privileges and tolerance were tokens of the Polish rulers' personal favour toward Jews. This favourable attitude was not necessarily fed on scandalous motives, as was the case with the story of Esterka, the Jewish lover of King Casimir the Great, which was revealed by Długosz. This legend, fascinating in itself and triggering obvious biblical connotations, and which was meant to explain the merit of Jewish privileges through the influence exerted by a woman, was taken over by the Jewish literature a hundred

years after Długosz; yet, it has not been the only medieval fable of a ruler's relation with a Jewess (to recall the story of Alphonse VIII of Castile and Rachel).

The first part of the book under review is crowned by a chapter bearing a somewhat enigmatic title 'Kościół i rabini' [The Church and the rabbis]. The starting point for the author to unfold her considerations is a scarcity of studies taking into account the attitudes of Jews toward Christians. As she remarks, this research deficit is not fully justifiable by a narrow stock of source material. The Jewish point-of-view, ensuing from a religious culture, is investigable not only based upon the scarce surviving fractions of texts written down in the Hebrew alphabet but also with use of Latin-language writings – the precondition being that the terminological barrier separating both parties to the conflict is comprehended. A case in point is the memo by Bishop of Wrocław, quoted by Zaremska, which disparages the ritual slaughter practices carried out by someone referred to as a 'Jewish bishop'. The importance of the opportunity paved through an appropriate method of reading non-Jewish sources with an intent to recognise the local practices of Judaism believers, be it overtly contrary to the norms of the Law, is perfectly illustrated by a 1463 note regarding certain Jews who had met their obligation to deliver before ducal officials a kinsman, dead or alive. They did so by having brought for such presentation his dead corpse contained in a wooden coffin rather than shroud-wrapped (at this point, the author possibly goes too far in her interpretation by believing that the body had been exhumed). The chapter under discussion offers us also an opportunity to get acquainted with segregation tendencies as expressed by Christian and Jewish men of authority; also, with the issue of conversions to Christianity, with special focus on their consequences; and, with responses documenting the relations between Poland-based communities and the Ashkenazi-Diaspora learned men. No less interestingly, it turns out that the practice of seeking external authority's opinions could be regarded as infringement of the Mazovian duke's rule over his Jews.

The second part of H. Zaremska's book opens with a chapter clarifying why the Cracow community is actually dealt with therein. It was namely one of the earliest Jewish settlements which emerged in order to handle far-reaching trade in the Central-European area, and confirmed as such in a very early response (dated first half of eleventh century). Since thirteenth century, this community was developing into the major and largest centre of Jewish life in Poland. Majer Bałaban wrote a monograph of it one hundred years ago (*Historia Żydów w Krakowie i na Kazimierzu 1304–1868* [A history of Jews in Cracow and Kazimierz, 1304–1868], 1912).

The next chapter in sequence, 'Ulica Żydowska' [Jewish Street], was first published in 1999 as a pioneering study of the phenomenon it discusses, given the Polish historiographic context, and recognised as a research sensa-



tion.<sup>5</sup> A Cracow street so named, mentioned in the sources since fourteenth century, is one among those Jewish settlements or colonies in the Central Europe on whose edge a university was founded – with all the consequences of such neighbourhood for the mutual relations. A detailed analysis of the history of real property ownership locally has shown what non-permanent Jewish abodes or residential places were like (and how ‘insular’ they were): within the researchable period of, roughly, one century and a half, these places were permanently moved before the advancing Christian neighbours.

Chapter Three, titled ‘Gmina’ [The community], offers a reconstruction of the organisation of kahal, the functions and the cast-of-members of the elders’ bodies and community institutions, relationships with the outer world (e.g. with respect to the issue of distribution and sale of ritual-slaughter meat, being of interest to Christian butchers; or, in connection with conflicts within the Jewish society, as brought to the rulers or Christian courts-of-law). At last, the issues of use/abuse of the curse, the functioning of the rabbinate, and ‘Jewish doctors’, known from Christian sources, are discussed at length.

Chapter Four – ‘Postacie: Lewko i Rachela Fiszel’ [The figures: Lewko and Rachela Fiszer] – is of a different character: it renders the reader better acquainted with the most outstanding personages, according to the author. They were not famous scholars, of which there were none in the medieval Cracow, but a banker and a (female) creditor to the monarchs. An original and, to my mind, successful attempt has been made at writing not so much classical bios but rather, essays on the vicissitudes of the financiers and their families. Lewko raised funds in second half of fourteenth century for the kings: Casimir the Great, Louis I of Hungary, Hedwig and Ladislas II Jagiello. Rachela, who came from Prague and was Mojżesz (Moses) Fiszel’s widow, was active in the late fifteenth/early sixteenth century as a creditor to the kings: Casimir IV Jagiellon, John I Albert and Alexander Jagiellon. The figure of this financier must have fascinated the author with the sturdy, resolute traits of her character (just to mention a source-based vivid account of the destruction she caused maliciously, or perhaps in a fury attack, to a house she was supposed to leave), and with the hard life of a woman who, once widowed, eventually managed to take over the family business.

The following chapter, ‘Żydowscy konwertyci’ [Jewish converts] – another one dealing with vicissitudes of people – is the first dedicated study of the issue in the Polish literature. In absolute number terms, conversions were not a major problem in the perception of the Christian community in Poland, one which would call for being documented in detail. The author has counted a total of twenty-two conversions from Judaism in the last one hundred years of the Middle Ages in Cracow alone, seeing no peculiar dynamism

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<sup>5</sup> Published also in English: ‘Jewish Street (*Platea Judeorum*) in Cracow: the 14th – First Half of the 15th C.’, *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 83 (2001), 27–58.

within that process. Neophytes would puzzlingly often take up university studies; on the other hand, there probably were such who stuck to Judaism among the Cracow students, and their attendance is only explainable in terms of getting prepared for a baptism. Neophytes could be admitted to the municipal laws; in a single case, the christening set out a career which finally led to ennoblement. But Zaremska's narration is primarily a story of complicated human vicissitudes, only selectively perceptible based on non-Jewish sources.

The last thematic block in the book's second section consists of three chapters, each dealing with a separate fifteenth-century event. One such event was an incidental pogrom of 1407. The author provides us with an in-depth study of such specified source-based fact, focused on an afterthought concerning the skill of quitting a 'pogrom ambience'. Another event, described in the chapter 'Żydzi i inkwizycja' [Jews and the Inquisition], was a court trial of a group of Cracow Jews, neutralised by the monarch in 1495. Although we are not aware today what they were accused of, and why finally released, the author proves to us that we can comprehend a supra-local context of the trial being prepared, as we learn about the activity of certain milieus that incessantly tried to incite anti-Jewish actions in the Europe of second half of fifteenth century. The temporal coincidence with the relocation in 1494 of Cracow Jews to Kazimierz, which was another successful undertaking, cannot be merely accidental: this operation is discussed in the final chapter. Defined by some of the contemporaneous observers as an exile, it has bound the Jewish community, until twentieth century, with a separate part of the Cracow agglomeration (or, a town within it), where the trade restrictions imposed ten years before then for Cracow itself were not in force. This is the interpretation suggested by Zaremska, who goes as far as claiming that transplanting the Jews into Kazimierz heralded a new strategy whereby Jewish enclaves would be set up within private *jurydykas*,<sup>6</sup> not far from the towns proper where the Jews were no more tolerated.

A careful editorial effort applied to the publication has overlooked sporadic and fairly non-significant defects (as in p. 256 where Garbary [Tanners] Street 'turns into' Św. Barbary [St Barbara] Street). The thirty-six illustrations with which the book is furnished are of excellent quality and are related with the content; there are 4 maps and 3 city layouts provided. The legible reproductions provided of manuscript sheets quoted are worthy of note, as are the unique photographs of so-called *Judensau* in the Gniezno Cathedral – the only such caricature effigies of Jews in architectural sculpture known to appear

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<sup>6</sup> A *jurydyka* was a settlement located normally right outside a royal city, that was independent from the municipal laws and rulers but instead remained under the jurisdiction of the ecclesiastic or secular lord who chartered, founded and owned it.

east of Germany, let me remark. As for a literal approach applied to selected figures appearing in the scenes of the Passion of Christ taken from Gothic altars stored in Polish museum collections, in terms of 'grotesque representations of Jews in Christian painting', I would personally deem such a concept daring, to say the least.

Since the book being reviewed consists of separate studies (at times, regrettably, overlapping content-wise), their thematic content being extensive, this review is appearing inadvertently verbose. Still, apart from the aforesaid, there are a number of novel observations, interpretations, and discoveries to be found in the Zaremska work. The content in its entirety is rendered coherent through an excellent, clear narrative thread woven throughout the book, which makes the reading experience absorbing and never tough or boring. Above all, we have received a fundamental work, one that skilfully summarises the progress made in research on the medieval period in its general, Polish, and Jewish aspects over the long period after World War II – while itself offering new and remarkable achievements in this field. There is no exaggeration to state that it is to Hanna Zaremska's credit that the presently written history of Polish Jewry in the Middle Ages has ceased to limit itself, on the whole, to a continual reinterpretation of the state of research dating to the first half of twentieth century.

*trans. Tristan Korecki*

*Mateusz Goliński*

Grischa Vercamer, *Siedlungs-, Sozial- und Verwaltungsgeschichte der Komturei Königsberg in Preußen (13.–16. Jahrhundert)*, Marburg, 2010, N.G. Elwert Verlag, IX + 656 pp., bibliog., maps, indexes, DVD; series: Einzelschriften der Historischen Kommission für Ost- und Westpreußische Landesforschung, 29

With all the extremely well developed research of the State of the Teutonic Order, a relatively small number of studies have dealt with social and administrative changes in individual territorial management units in thirteenth- to sixteenth-century Prussia. The book by Grischa Vercamer, a scholar employed with the German Historical Institute in Warsaw, is one of the most recent such publications. This monograph follows up its author's earlier research interests focusing around social transformations and the shaping of territorial administration in the Teutonic Prussia.

The central objective behind this particular study, as defined in its introduction, is to provide a profile of social and settlement-related processes as well as administrative changes in rural areas of the Königsberg *Kommende* (*Komturei*) (p. 3). The author's focus does not extend to settlement processes

related to incorporations of urban centres in a given area, which would otherwise have complemented the image of the *Kommende's* society. The fact is that, especially, the development of the Königsberg agglomeration composed of the areas of Altstadt (Old Town), Kneiphof and Löbenicht, resulted in an altered ethnical image of the territory's society as a whole. It is important that the relevant types of settlement, i.e. urban and rural, be taken into consideration as they strongly influenced each other, not merely in economic terms. First of all, the city's demographic development was based upon permanent inflow of people from its closest (rural) surroundings, not just from other urban hubs, some of them quite remote. This phenomenon is observable in other big Prussian cities,<sup>1</sup> Königsberg being no doubt included. Second, Königsberg's three municipalities held their off-city properties and expanded them in fourteenth and fifteenth century, making economic use of them, in the first place and, to a lesser extent, pursuing settlement activities. Thirdly, Königsberg burghers bought, on their own, landed estates in their closest vicinities as well as in other *Komtureis* of the Teutonic State. The fact that the Königsberg *Kommende* towns, particularly the Königsberg agglomeration, are outside of the subject-matter of this book cannot be explained in terms of an otherwise satisfactory current state of research and number of existing publications (p. 4). Königsberg of thirteenth to sixteenth centuries was a specific urban centre in Prussia for which the issues of social history, particularly demographic processes, remain not-too-well recognised. This is partly explainable by the poor condition of Königsberg's municipal registers and, especially, lack of municipal-law admission registers (dating back to 1406 for the Altstadt; in existence till early 18th c.); these are partly replaceable by the surviving rent or tax registers.

The source base for this monograph is, first of all, official registers from the Teutonic Order archive and the Prussian Duke's archive of Königsberg, kept today at the Secret State Archives, Prussian Culture Heritage Foundation, Berlin-Dahlem (Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preußischer Kulturbesitz). These are grouped into two sections: the 'Ordensfolianten' (OF) and the 'Ostpreußische Folianten' (Ostpr. Fol.). Of the former, registers from the late fourteenth/early fifteenth century have been made use of, containing privileges or charts from the Königsberg *Kommende* area, *inter alia*; the latter is chiefly represented by the so-called certificates of individual 'fiscal districts' (*Kammerämter*), being collections of privileges issued in 1528–33. These registers review all the earlier-dated privileges. Written down, for most part, based on documents from thirteenth to fifteenth century, they form an excellent source for imaging the changes taking place in the settlement activities between ca. 1400 and the former half of sixteenth century. The image of the settlement in the former

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<sup>1</sup> E.g., the share of immigration to Gdańsk from the closest vicinity amounted to 20 per cent.

Königsberg *Kommende* territory in the first years of existence of the Duchy of Prussia is complemented with a special tax register dated 1539–40, related to the endangerment of Poland with a Turkish incursion at the time. The time the register was made additionally sets the monograph's final caesura. The source base is completed with documents, Teutonic-Order correspondence and single inventories from the 'Pergamenturkundenbestand' and 'Ordensbriefarchiv' funds. For the ducal period, of use were the archives and records from the funds of 'Herzogliches Briefarchiv' and 'Etatsministerium'. Apart from the Berlin archive, the author has also made use of the resources of the State Archives of Toruń.

There are eight chapters, the introductory chapter formulating the objectives, research methods applied and the source base. Chapter 2 includes a profile of the area's natural conditions, in line with the classical approach to the research on the developments of settlement. The land layout and its topographic features are taken into account; moreover, changes in the forest cover of the *Kommende* area until the second half of sixteenth century are discussed. The Teutonic Order's forestry is characterised as a peculiar 'protection programme' extending to the most valuable species which could only be used, by consent of the authorities, as a construction material. Referring to the existing historiographic research, G. Vercamer assessed entire Prussia's forest cover at 80 per cent of the total land area, as of 1280. The *Kommende's* forest cover rate was diverse: the areas stretching east of Deyma River (Ger. Deime), up to the Lithuanian border, formed an almost continuous chain of forests; in Sambia, a relatively densely populated area, forests occupied ca. 71 per cent of the area in sixteenth century. A separate subchapter deals with the role of amber in the Teutonic economy of Prussia, with a special focus on the organisation of amber mining. Acquisition of amber by the 'amber master' (*Bernsteinmeister*) of Lochstädt was ensured by the feudal obligations of the eight Prussian villages on the Sambian coast, along with certain free Prussian villages. The said subchapter also characterises tribal splits among the Prussians populating the later-period Königsberg *Kommende* area. Basing on the surviving source accounts, the author has reconstructed the borderlines between the individual tribal territories of Sambia, Nadrovia, Bartia and Natangia, plus the section of Sudovia which formed part of the *Kommende* in a later period. In addition, settlement processes completed in that territory by the early sixteenth century are described, with particular emphasis on colonisation of the great strip of forests in the east of the Teutonic Prussia, the so-called Great Primeval Forest (*Große Wildnis*).

Chapter 3 deals with the situation of the Prussian people in the Königsberg *Kommende* area before the Teutonic conquest and in the phase of the emergence of Teutonic administrative structures therein. The author raises the issue of social organisation of the Prussians, i.e. three-level division into territorial associations, the basic ones being the 'fields' (*lauks*) and 'villages'

(*kaymis*),<sup>2</sup> making up greater communities referred to as the *moter*. The top-tier units were districts of, initially, a political and, subsequently, territorial nature, named the *pulkas*. The enormous role of the environment – in particular, the forest areas – is pointed out with regard to the shaping of the territorial reach of individual units. As noticed by Vercamer, not every single *pulka* was identical with its later-date counterpart *Kammerämter*.

Using the onomastic method developed and applied by other scholars (Hans Mortensen, Leo Gimboth, Grasilda Blažienė), Vercamer has identified a total of 225 settlements existing before the territory was seized by the Teutonic Order. The criterion for such identification was the suffixes of the names of localities. The three categories of Prussian localities set up before the Order came in are those whose names: (1) include either of the suffixes -au, -ow, -ahnen; (2) belong to diminutive forms or field names (the endings: -icken, -itten, -aiten); and, (3) belong to older field names (ended: -ehnen, -ayn, -ein, -en, -ienen). Localities established later include the settlements whose names: (i) include either of the suffixes: -keim, -medien (indicative of the settlement's rural character); (ii) have the -nicken suffix (appearing in latest-settled areas); (iii) end with -laucken; (iv) are not categorised elsewhere; (v) have either of the endings: -walde, -see, -bach. The onomastic method has enabled to determine with considerable certainty that names of localities in the Königsberg *Kommende*, testified by the sources until the 1330s, belong to the three categories classed by H. Mortensen's onomastic classification as older settlements. Vercamer's research, whose outcome is presented in Chapter 5, has also confirmed that the real settlement expansion commenced in that territory only during the rule of Marshal Dietrich von Altenburg (1331–5). The author has also broken down the location of the oldest Prussian settlements by geological conditions and in terms of natural-geographic environment. This analysis has led to several conclusions: Prussian settlements did not concentrate on the Baltic coastal area but deeper inside the land, most frequently along the rivers and on the edges of terminal moraines. Moreover, Prussian settlements were situated in the vicinity of oak forests suitable for swine pasturage. The Prussians preferred clay soils while avoiding sandy grounds. G. Vercamer does not confirm the earlier thesis by H. Mortensen which claimed that the settlements whose names have the suffixes -owe or -au were fortified, or had any connection with Prussian burg-cities or strongholds.

Chapter 4 deals with the shaping of the Teutonic administration in the area under research. The author has proved the Königsberg *Kommende*'s special economic and political role among the administrative units of eastern

<sup>2</sup> The Polish reference literature interprets this particular unit as a 'pen'/'manor'; cf. Łucja Okulicz-Kozaryn, *Dzieje Prusów* (Monografie Fundacji na rzecz Nauki Polskiej. Seria Humanistyczna, 3rd edn, Wrocław, 2000), 284–5.

Prussia. This role was primarily due to the fact that the Königsberg *Komtur* acted as the Grand Marshal. The basis for the economic significance of this administrative unit was the incorporation in 1286 and the development within its area of the Königsberg Altstadt, which later grew to become one of the so-called great Prussian cities. G. Vercamer has made an attempt at estimating the incomes obtained from the *Kommende*. He has found that these incomes came not only from rental charges and peasant corvées (*Scharwerk*) but also from the trade, including in amber, carried out by the *Großschäffer* of Königsberg.

The administration of the Königsberg *Kommende* is discussed further on, it being noticed that prior to the second Prussian uprising of 1260–73, the Prussians probably amounted to a half of the convent's members; the uprising over, the convent consisted almost only of Germans. The convent's organisational development is subsequently outlined – starting with the conventual offices, through to non-autonomous ministration districts (*Pflegeämter*), single Teutonic granges, manors and forest manors. The author also tackles the issue of *Kommende* finance system. As he has found, the income, concentrated till 1404 in the hands of the Grand Marshal (*Oberster Marschall*), got decentralised into several independent dispensaries: the one of the Grand Marshall, House-Komtur (*Hauskomtur*) and *Großschäffer*. The process of independent dispensaries getting separated for each ministration district got intensified since 1410.

The shaping of the offices of Königsberg *Komtur* and Grand Marshal (merged together since 1312) are the subject of dedicated subchapters. As shown by Vercamer, the political role of Grand Marshal reached far beyond the territorial reach of the Königsberg *Kommende*: as a matter of fact, the Komturs of Memel (Lith. Klaipėda), Balga and Brandenburg (Pol. Pokarmin, Lith. Pokarviai) were subordinate to him. The Grand Marshal pursued a foreign policy since fifteenth century, particularly involving Lithuania. An analysis of the descent of the Grand Marshals has led to the conclusion that the office was in most cases held by dignitaries of Franconian origin.

The following chapter analyses a body of documents dated 1309 to 1466 and referring to the demesnes within the Königsberg *Kommende*, based on the shared source parameters: the issuer, area of land bestowed and the rights and obligations of the recipient. The analysis implies that there were distributed competencies between the Grand Marshal and the Grand Master as far as land bestowals to free individuals (i.e. landholders) were concerned. Larger estate complexes, furnished with better rights, were bestowed by Grand Masters. The Grand Marshal mainly participated in incorporation of villages under the Culm (Pol. Chełmno) law, the issuer of villages incorporated within the Great Primeval Forest was usually the Grand Master. Other officials (the Sambian *Schultheiß*) limited their diplomatic activities to confirming earlier-issued privileges or charters.

The relations between the Sambian Bishopric and the Teutonic Order, and with the Grand Marshal in specific, are discussed in a separate subchapter. The following subchapter deals with changes in the Teutonic administration between 1454 and 1525, with the focus on two questions: the decline of the importance of the Grand Marshal office, which resulting from the removal of the Grand Master's seat to Königsberg in 1457 lost its office as Königsberg komtur;<sup>3</sup> and, attempted reforms undertaken in the final phase of the Teutonic Order State's existence, particularly in the area of defence (1506). The reform of authority bodies at the moment the Order's state was transformed into a secular duchy is also covered. The last subchapter of Chapter 4 presents the structure of public administration in the Königsberg *Kommende* area, both in the Teutonic time and in the early years of the Duchy of Prussia.

Chapter 5 presents the changes in the settlement relations in the Königsberg *Komturei* in the period of 1255 to 1540. Characterised are the consecutive stages of settlement processes, from the settlement expansion lasting into the first decade of fifteenth century till inhibited after the Great War of 1409–11 and, especially, the Thirteen Years' War, 1453–66. The first stage (till 1410), marked with the emergence of the basic network of villages, is divided by the author into eight developmental phases. As Vercamer shows us, the later inhibition of the settlement processes came as a result of not only an economic crisis in the Teutonic State but also, of the assumption of different objectives in the settlement policy: the development of the Great Primeval Forest in its southern part, or settlement – after the Thirteen Years' War damage – of the existing but deserted farm holdings. Apart from showing the course taken by the settlement processes, Vercamer analyses the settlement situation at two temporal points – around 1400 and in 1540. As for the former, the effects of so-called 'great measurement', conducted since 1396, are discussed (known to the sources as the *Große Maße*); in particular, analysis is extended to the degree in which the 'hook' (*Haken*; area unit in farmsteads owned by Prussians) was replaced by the 'field' (*Hufe*) appearing in villages incorporated under the Culm law. Along with changes of this type, the 'great measurement' was also accompanied by merging together separate villages (this action effectively extended to a total of 24 villages). With the

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<sup>3</sup> Janusz Tandecki and Marian Biskup claim that after the Thirteen Years' War, Grand Marshals continued to act as Königsberg komturs; cf. Marian Biskup, 'Lenne Prusy Krzyżackie w latach 1466–1525', in *idem* and Gerard Labuda, *Dzieje zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach. Gospodarka – społeczeństwo – państwo – ideologia* (Seria Monografii Pomorskich, 2nd edn, Gdańsk, 1988), 440; Janusz Tandecki, 'Podziały administracyjne państwa zakonnego w Prusach', in Zenon Hubert Nowak (ed.), *Państwo zakonu krzyżackiego w Prusach. Podziały administracyjne i kościelne w XIII–XVI wieku* (Toruń, 2000), 27.



replacement of the area unit applied by the Prussian free individuals, the 'great measurement' resulted in extended areas of their farmsteads; yet, the main objective for the Teutonic administration was in this case to increase rent-based income. Similarly, combining the villages in certain *Kammerämter* was probably meant to provide room for continued settlement activity. The author has also characterised the forms of settlement appearing around 1400, making calculations for each of them (i.e. for Prussian peasants, peasants under the Culm law, peasants in estates of great Prussian free individuals, free individuals, domestic staff, rural artisans, innkeepers and millers). As noticed by Vercamer, the Königsberg *Kommende's* rural society saw its constituent ethnical groups (the Prussians, Germans, and Lithuanians) integrating – the reason being that German settlers dwelled in the villages alongside Prussians, with the latter being sometimes settled under the Culm law. Analysis of the settlement situation as of 1540 identified changes taking place in the area under research over more than a hundred years. The author has observed an increased number of desolated spots, along with transformation of the 'small Prussian' and free peasant class into so-called *Kölmer* (i.e. holders of free estates according to the Culm law), and described the ethnical relations in rural areas in the former half of sixteenth century.

Along with Chapter 5, Chapter 6, dealing with the 'free individuals' or landholder class, forms the central part of the monograph by G. Vercamer. The process of emergence of this social group is described, its origin being traced down to the stratum of Prussian warriors and nobles of the pre-Teutonic period; Vercamer characterises this group as follows: 'Es musste sich dabei also um eine Schicht handeln, die der Orden von Beginn an als "frei" akzeptierte und ihnen im Gegenzug dafür Kriegsdienst abverlangte' (p. 256). He has traced increased political activity of the 'free' class which, being one of the social-political entities of the Prussian class society (these entities being described in the sources as *erbarlewte*), got crystallised during the development of the peace treaty of Brześć Kujawski, 1435. Later on, some of the free individuals, together with former Teutonic dignitaries, formed the nobility class. The chapter also touches upon settlement activities of free individuals. As noticed by Vercamer, the 'small free' (*Kleine Freien*) stratum cultivated the land on their own, whilst the 'great free' (*Große Freien*) primarily appeared as residents of new villages. The 'small free', most of whom owned estates of 2–4 hooks, usually dwelled in the neighbourhood of peasants and constituted rural communities together with them. In some cases, the 'small free' inhabited areas outside villages. Settling the 'small free' in the Great Primeval Forest territory was menial as it was related to reinforcing the defence system in the frontier areas. A separate subchapter deals with the *koning* (*kunige/konige*) and the *viting* stratum. As Vercamer remarks, both terms already appeared in the pre-Teutonic period, referring to the ruling class and a group of warriors. In the Teutonic period these notions changed their meaning. The

period sources prove that both the *konings* and the *vitings* descended from the Prussian 'small free' class and served in burg-cities. They were at times used as supervisors of great construction projects pursued by the Order, or even as messengers on the Order's service. In reward for their service, they got paid or, in some cases, received small landed properties. There were slight legal differences appearing between the two groups (as e.g. with the *konings* enjoying a partial right for jurisdiction over their subjects). As the author puts it, 'bei den Königen vielleicht sogar von einem Anachronismus aus altpreußischen Zeiten sprechen kann' (p. 296).

Subject to an analysis of the privileges enjoyed by the 'great' and 'small' free individuals have been: the type of the law, the right to exercise jurisdiction, the amount of wergild, other rights (e.g. fisheries, the right of pasturage and the right of use of forest), various liabilities and duties to the Teutonic administration (rents, services and attendances – particularly, military service, so-called *Reiterdienst* or *Platendienst*, with or without the castle building obligation). This analysis was necessary to identify the distinctive features in both groups concerned, as otherwise not differentiated in the sources, and to render precise the indicators of membership in either. Most of the privileges relating to the 'small free' group were issued in second half of fourteenth century, especially in the time Grand Marshal Werner von Tettingen was in office (i.e. 1392–1404). This came out probably as a manifestation of the Order's premeditated policy aimed at setting the social relations in an order and precisely defining the obligations, especially military ones, toward the Order in face of increasing military needs of the Teutonic State in that period. The privileges of both free groups mutually compared, the author has come to the conclusion that the 'great free' differed from the 'small free' by the amount or size of the property bestowed (over 10 hooks), with the consequent option to establish their own villages, the wergild guaranteed to the benefit of the injured party's family in case of homicide, and the right to exercise higher jurisdiction. Since Vercamer has only found that there is a general relation between those characteristics and rights of the 'great free' group, the finding calls for being reconfirmed through a statistical analysis of their mutual correlations. Another way to verify these findings with respect to the characteristics and rights of both 'free' groups, which is not followed by the present study, would be to carry out a minute internal criticism of the OF 111 register, made, as evidenced by Vercamer, in 1404. As he mentions (p. 253), there is a heading on the page 129r of the register, making a reference to copies of privileges or charters granted to the 'small free', to be found elsewhere in the register ('dis sein der kleinen freien hantvesten abeschriften'). As the content of the privileges does not discern between the 'small free' and the 'great free' individuals, the heading's significance needs being emphasised: these lines unambiguously determine which privileges referred in specific to the 'small free'.

The last subchapter approaches the emergence of nobility in Prussia past 1466. It is apparent that no knightly class appeared in the eastern *Komtureis* of the Teutonic State in fourteenth–fifteenth century; hence, the nobility as an estate was emerging in that area in a specific way. The class in question was getting shaped based on three different groups: (1) the ‘great free’ individuals; (2) military commanders arriving in Prussia from Germany and Bohemia, whom the Order granted with pledges or land as a consideration for their service in the Thirteen Years’ War; (3) former Teutonic brethren who remained in Prussia after 1525. For each of these groups, the process is illustrated by a presentation of the families that later on formed the Prussian nobility – that is, respectively: Georg and Christoph von Schlieben, of Saxony; Hector von Hessberg, former Teutonic knight; finally, von Perbandt, a Prussian family coming from Sambia. A comparison of the 1435 and 1448 lists of individuals who confirmed the peace of Brześć Kujawski against the tax register of 1540, it has been found that, as of 1540, a total of seventeen families in Sambia descended from the local society, six came from other parts of Prussia whereas eighteen had arrived from the outside.

Chapter 7 discusses the social situation of peasantry in the Königsberg *Kommende*. The analysis extends to the legal and economic situation of Prussian, German (for villages under the Culm law) and Lithuanian peasants. As observed by the author, ‘infrastrukturell waren die preußischen Dörfer in jedem Fall schlechter gestellt als die kulmischen Dörfer’ (p. 352). The criteria that enabled to express this opinion included availability of trade sites (that is, inns, in most cases) and of churches in Prussian villages. Both types of objects appeared in Prussian villages more seldom than in Culm-law villages.

The last chapter discusses the legal and economic situation of the clergy, innkeepers and millers. The other groups taken into account by Vercamer, such as cottagers, dealt with fishery, craftsmanship or wage labour as the primary types of their activity.

The book is complemented with an annex detailing the sources and listing, in a tabular form, i.a.: the Königsberg *Komturei* villages of ca. 1400 and of 1540, specifying the number of peasants, free individuals and the sizes of peasant properties (Table 1); Teutonic officials (central and for the *Komturei* – Table 3); lands bestowed in line with the privileges comprised in OF 105 and 107 (Table 6).

The present monograph by Vercamer primarily analyses the settlement processes. Staying loyal to the historiographic current represented by Heide Wunder and Kinya Abe, he formulates a different catalogue of questions than the scholars researching the second current of the social history of the Teutonic Order State, which pays special attention to the role of family and property-related ties among individual representatives of the social elite. Although social history is an important field of Vercamer’s research, he took account of the roads of advancement of the ‘great free’ and other social groups

to the emerging nobility class in only a general manner. Among the families identified, he made just a few of them subject to a prosopographical analysis (the aforementioned Georg and Christoph von Schlieben, H. von Hessberg, the von Perbandt family, and Andreas Ripp). Hence, a detailed research into the issue remains a scholarly postulate. The free-individuals stratum is subject to more remarks from the reviewer. As Vercamer states, 'die Stabilität der Freien über die gesamte Ordenszeit ist beachtlich' (p. 254); still, the question remains open with regards to relocations of individuals within the free group.

The research capabilities with respect to peasants deserting their villages – a phenomenon characteristic not only to fourteenth-century Prussia – have not been made a full use of. The reason for such desertion was deteriorated legal environment of peasants in relation to the development of corvée farm in its early phase. Grischa Vercamer could in this respect have made use of certain other sources, particularly, the correspondence of Teutonic officials, including the Grand Master and the Grand Marshal, with the Gdańsk authorities. The query in the collection of Grand Masters and Teutonic dignitaries in the City-of-Gdańsk Archives would also enrich our knowledge on social-economic transformations in the Königsberg *Kommende*.<sup>4</sup>

An important achievement of G. Vercamer is, for a change, his presentation of the data gained on the basis of the source query not only in the form of tables attached but also with use of maps produced within the Geographic Information System (GIS). The framework onto which the data have been plotted was maps from an atlas of the East Prussia, made by Friedrich Leopold von Schrötter in 1796–1802. Each locality or economic object within the *Kommende* is marked in the map, each having a number attached. Detailed information on the legal environment of a bestowal or locality incorporation as well as on the related source is traceable in the tables provided in the annex. The said maps are attached not only in a printed form but also in an electronic format, thus enabling any selection of data; e.g., map no. 8, showing the development of the settlements in the Königsberg *Kommende* till 1400, allows us to trace the increments of the settlement network in individual phases. Yet, some of the localities mentioned in Table 1 – a breakdown of Prussian, Lithuanian and Culm-law villages ca. 1540, are not plotted on the related map no. 9. This is primarily true for the village of Bubainen on the Pregel River, west of Insterburg (Regnr. 2503): the village was incorporated within a Kneiphof-owned patrimonial territory. In spite of this defect, the data presented with use of the GIS is a great achievement of the book as it may provide the starting point for further research, particularly with respect to local history.

The study, devoted to the social history and the history of settlement, presents in a micro-scale the economic-and-social phenomena characteristic to many regions of medieval Europe, that is, mass-scale settlement move-

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<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., the State Archives in Gdańsk, ref. no. 300, D/39, 278.

ments and the related cultural diffusion processes. At the beginning, the author expressed his hope that 'größere Synthesen zu diesem gesamt europäischem Phänomen im Hoch- und Spätmittelalter bedürfen zwangsläufig gut aufbereiteten Mikrostudien' (p. 1). This monograph does fulfil such postulate. It should be emphasised that the use of the GIS methodology ought to make this study a starting point for more detailed analyses and for broadening the database of sources regarding individual localities and economic objects of the Königsberg *Kommende*. An important research postulate, in view of cognising the social-economic processes of this particular part of the medieval and early-modern Prussia, would be to have a similar monograph written for the Sambian Bishop's estate complex.<sup>5</sup> For this area, visitations of the Sambian Bishopric estates of 1569 and 1570 have been published, which, similarly to the tax register of the Königsberg *Komturei* of 1539 (used in the Vercamer book), may also form the final caesura for social and settlement research on the episcopal territory.<sup>6</sup> This put aside, the present study by G. Vercamer, taking into account the research postulates presented in this review, ought to become a model for developing similar social and settlement history monographs with respect to the other, not yet researched, *Komtureis* of the Teutonic Order State.

trans. *Tristan Korecki*

*Marcin Grulkowski*

<sup>5</sup> Radosław Biskup, 'Działalność osadnicza biskupów i kapituły sambijskiej do końca XIV wieku. Relacje między zakonem krzyżackim a duchowieństwem sambijskim', *Zapiski Historyczne*, lxvii, 3–4 (2002), 25–59.

<sup>6</sup> *Wizytacja biskupstwa sambijskiego z 1569 r.*, ed. Jacek Wijaczka (Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu. Fontes, 90, Toruń, 2001); *Wizytacja biskupstwa sambijskiego z 1570 r.*, ed. *idem* (Towarzystwo Naukowe w Toruniu. Fontes, 96, Toruń 2005).

Michael Ostling, *Between the Devil and the Host: Imagining Witchcraft in Early Modern Poland*, Oxford and New York, 2011, Oxford University Press, 279 pp., bibliog., index, tables, ill., annex; Past & Present Book Series

The recent time has seen a boost in publications on witchcraft and witchcraft trials in Poland. Małgorzata Pilaszek's synthetic study of the problem deserves a special mention,<sup>1</sup> albeit it has left a number of issues open. Alongside several local studies, the said work has essentially contributed to enlarging our knowledge. Western historians have also got interested in witchcraft trials in Poland, one of the outcomes being the book by Michael Ostling of the Central Michigan University, Canada, coming out as a printed version of the author's doctoral thesis.

<sup>1</sup> Małgorzata Pilaszek, *Procesy o czary w Polsce w wiekach XV–XVIII* (Cracow, 2008).

The book consists of three parts. The first, titled 'History' (pp. 11–106), comprises four chapters discussing the historical and social context of the witchcraft trials, the ideas and depictions of witchcraft in the Polish literature and law, the course of trial ('A winding road to the stake') and the related legal mechanisms. The second, 'Religion', shows the imaginary practices of Polish witches, set in the context of actual magical practices of their prosecutors and the normative teachings of the Catholic Church. Specified are the spells and rituals ascribed to the witches, as well as the 'real' spells, prayers and magical rites of ordinary Polish people. Torture tended to squeeze out of the alleged witches fictitious testimonies whose content proved imaginable to almost all the members of the period's society. The third part of the book, 'Demonology', presents early-modern Poles' imaginary contacts between the alleged witches and a/the devil(s). As Ostling observes, the testimonies uttered by the accused women implied that the local Polish home ghosts assumed the form of a Christian devil. The process was two-way, in fact: the domestic ghosts diabolised, the devil tended to be 'domesticated' (p. viii).

The book is equipped with an introduction and a conclusion. An annex headed 'Polish witch-trials, 1511–1775' is attached.

As for chronology, the study's matter is contained within the timeframe of 1511–1776. The first mentioned date marks the first execution, by burning at stake, of an anonymous Polish woman charged with dabbling in harmful sorcery at Chwaliszewo<sup>2</sup> (the erroneous form of 'Waliszewo' is consistently used). The latter date marks the amended law, and related legal procedure, for witchcraft practices. At a diet sitting in Warsaw, King Stanislas Augustus concluded his oration, delivered on 23 October 1776, by submitting a proposition to abolish torture in judicial proceedings. Wojciech Kluszewski, Castellan of Biecz, added his request proposing that the capital punishment be abolished for witchcraft cases. Both motions were accepted unanimously.

The basic source material Michael Ostling has made use of spans 1610 to 1750, the period deemed by the author to be the climax of witch trials and intellectual interest in witchcraft in Poland (p. 7). As for territory, the study's research area focuses on the Kingdom of Poland, termed 'the Crown' at the time.

The author's objective was to place the phenomenon of witchcraft in Poland, and the related research, within a broader European, if not international, context. Contrary to what has been stated by Polish historiographers, stressing a uniqueness, tolerant attitude and 'suavity' characteristic to witch-hunt in the Crown, the author's point has now been to prove, first of all, that the situation in Poland did not diverge from that prevalent in other European countries (p. 6). The main reason behind sorcery accusations was conflicts within the rural society, which was the case in the West as well as

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<sup>2</sup> Presently, an area within Poznań, it was a separate town between 1444 and 1800, incorporated under the Magdeburg law.

in Poland. Second, Ostling endeavours to prove that the conviction shared among Polish researchers whereby a period of intense witchcraft trails and fear of witchcraft was once the case in Poland is erroneous, since most of the trials were not targeted at witchcraft but rather, magical spells and actions related to daily concerns and worries, quarrels and fears (p. 7).

The study's conclusion does not however offer a summary or reference to the objectives formulated in the introductory section, which would evaluate whether the assumed goals have actually been met. Instead, the conclusion offers methodological considerations on the relations between magic and religion; we are moreover told that Jonathan Z. Smith and Clifford Geertz have exerted a crucial impact on the way our contemporary researchers think of religion and culture (p. 239). For the methodology of M. Ostling's own study, the starting point was the Smith's finding that the category of religion ought to be transferred from the external world into the world of imagination, the notion of religion itself being a scholarly construct (p. 239).

J.Z. Smith's observation is not a novelty, let us add, since the relations between religion and magic has been debated for more than a century in ethnographical literature and, for several dozens of years now, amid historians dealing with religion and religiosity in the Antiquity and early-modern period.

Ostling's charge against the 'earlier generation' of scholars (as we find no names specified, it is not clear whether what he has in mind is any generation before his own) is that, having considered witch to be an 'imaginary being' and rejected the belief in sorcery, they explained the phenomena in terms of ignorance and religious fanaticism, apparently mostly characteristic to Christianity. In Ostling's opinion, albeit the 'moral outrage' of this group of scholars is appreciable, it was in fact aimed against the Catholic Church.

The author can see a plenty of drawbacks and flaws in the existing research and studies on witchcraft and witch trials. He believes, among other things, that explaining witchcraft trials by the 'scapegoat' effect frees scholars from any serious attempt at interpreting or understanding the experiences of both parties to sorceress trials – i.e. the prosecutor and the accused (p. 240). Historians dealing by this far with witchcraft trials have apparently neglected that 'the peasantry's Christianity' is contradictory to the images of witch and witchcraft to be found in the demonological literature of the time (p. 241). Having approached Christianity and witchcraft as mutually equivalent and imaginary categories, M. Ostling hoped that this might ensure a more diverse and less evaluative image of their reciprocal interactions (p. 241). My overall impression is that this author has not too meticulously read the existing relevant literature and tries to be innovative, preaching to the long-ago-converted.

The historical section in M. Ostling's study makes a reference to the number of witchcraft trials carried out in the Crown in the early-modern

time. The author says he has gathered information on trials held between 1511 and 1775 in his database, the number of such instances totalling 254, with 509 accused and a minimum of 248 executed (p. 18). For a change, M. Pilaszek specifies, in her aforementioned study, 867 trials held in the Crown in sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, with 1,174 women and 142 men accused.<sup>3</sup> At least one death sentence was passed in 309 trials.<sup>4</sup> A significant difference becomes thus apparent at the very first sight, and is not at all explained by M. Ostling, although he is aware of M. Pilaszek's book. He finds instead that although the Polish scholar's work is based upon extensive source query, the data she proposes are not complete (p. 18). He adds that, as opposed to Pilaszek, his database has relatively small information on trials in the Royal Prussia (p. 19, fn. 46); Pilaszek has quoted 183 trials conducted in the said Commonwealth province. In my review of her book, I have mentioned that there were many more such trials in the province, inclusive of those conducted at the municipal court of Grudziądz, or in Toruń.<sup>5</sup> The list Ostling has comprised in his book does not mention those trials, though; M. Pilaszek's findings prove to be more reliable.

It is thus hard to perceive the data Ostling offers in his book, in a tabular or chart form, as trustworthy; incomplete as they are, they draw a false picture of the phenomenon's scale. It has to be specified that the study in question was written primarily basing on the reference literature and trials-related printed sources, scarce as they are. The author makes it apparent that his only source query has been conducted at a Lublin archive. A map attached, titled 'Witch Trials in Poland, 16th–18th Centuries', gives the reader a false picture of deployment and scale of witchcraft trials in the Crown, as it suggests that such trials were only conducted in the specified localities. The fact is that related proceedings were not only held before municipal courts of the towns plotted in the map but also, and quite often indeed, at offsite sessions in nearby villages. A similar case is with diagram no. 1 (p. 19), showing the distribution of the number of trials across the provinces of the Commonwealth: the source base for the calculations presented remains unknown to us. If the basis was the data gathered by M. Ostling himself, the outcome is certainly not correspondent with the reality.

As a reviewer, it is my task to remark that the *Constitutio Criminalis Carolina*, referred to in brief as (the) *Carolina*, was actually enacted 1532, rather than 1534 (p. 46).

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<sup>3</sup> Pilaszek, *Procesy*, 509, 512.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, 510.

<sup>5</sup> Jacek Wijaczka, 'Procesy o czary w Polsce w epoce wczesnonowoczesnej', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, cxvi, 3 (2009), 113–26; *idem*, 'Procesy o czary przed sądem miejskim w Grudziądzu w XVI–XVII wieku', *Rocznik Grudziądzki* (2009 [2010]), 87–101.



The book by Michael Ostling, as released, probably satisfies the requirements posed for a doctoral thesis; yet, it certainly cannot serve as a synthetic monograph of witchcraft trials in early-modern Poland. The source base it has taken advantage of is too narrow, in the first place.

trans. *Tristan Korecki*

*Jacek Wijaczka*

Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *The Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania: International Diplomacy on the European Periphery (15th–18th Century): A Study of Peace Treaties Followed by Annotated Documents*, Leiden and Boston, 2011, Brill, XXIX + 1049 pp., bibliog., maps, index, series: *The Ottoman Empire and its Heritage. Politics, Society and Economy*, 47

The Crimean Khanate was a constant feature of the political scenery in Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Region of the Early Modern Period. However, its relations with neighbouring states still remain insufficiently understood even through the importance of the Tatar raids is commonly noticed (see the historiographical sketch, pp. XIII–XXV in the book). Well known for his reputed study on Ottoman-Polish relations in the early modern period,<sup>1</sup> Dariusz Kołodziejczyk decided to fill this gap through his highly interesting study on relations between Poland-Lithuania and the Crimean Khanate. The edition of peace instruments exchanged between these states constitutes an important part of the presented volume.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part provides the reader with a basic chronology of more than four-hundred years of diplomatic relations (pp. 3–220). The second part deals with the evolution of chancery forms, the typology, composition and contents of instruments of peace, and the procedure of peace making. The focus is on Crimean diplomatic procedures, which are not as well studied in comparison to those of Poland-Lithuania. The third part consists of the instruments of peace published in the original languages dating back to the years 1463–1742. The study includes a useful critical apparatus such as a list of exchanged instruments, list of the Crimean khans, Lithuanian grand dukes and Polish kings, description of the principles of publications, a selected bibliography, an index of persons and place names as well as facsimiles of the published documents and maps of Poland-Lithuania and the Northern Black Sea Region.

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<sup>1</sup> Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, *Ottoman-Polish Diplomatic Relations (15th–18th Century): An Annotated Edition of Ahdnames and Other Documents* (Leiden, 2000).

In the 'Introduction', the author presents Part I simply as a description of 'basic chronology, more detailed in cases when diplomatic negotiations and embassies resulted in formal instruments of peace'. He hopes that the *longue durée* approach adopted in the study would enable the reader to see more clearly both continuity and changes in the relations between the Khanate and Poland-Lithuania. The author does not claim to create a comprehensive study covering all aspects of these relations. On the contrary, he hopes that they would be the subject of future studies. This rather modest description bellies the larger scope of the study. Since the Crimean Khanate and Poland-Lithuania remain a part of unknown European peripheries for the majority of the potential readers, the author adds to his description of diplomatic relations pieces of information on the principal institutions of both states and a summary of the most important events in their domestic history. Usually, when the author refers to lesser known terms and historical events, he provides short descriptions or adds some specific commentaries on the subject. Concerning political events, such a decision seems to be the right one. Nonetheless, in the case of state institutions such a choice could be questioned. Let me illustrate my point on the example of the description of the vital Crimean institution of the *qaraçi beys*. At the beginning of Part I, in the section entitled 'Internal and external factors in the making of the Crimean Khanate', the author explains the term as follows:

In the Crimean hierarchy, next to the Giray family members stood the clan leaders called *qaraçıs* or *qaraçi beys*. Usually this title applied to the leaders of four major clans, though the composition of the 'privileged' clans changed with time. Until the early 16th century, these were the Shirins, Barins, Arghuns, and Qıpçaqs, of whom the Shirins were by far the most influential. The Shirin clan leaders, Mamaq and then his brother Eminek, were to play a major role in the crucial decade between 1468 and 1478 (pp. 16–17).

Twenty pages later, the author returns to the subject of the *qaraçi beys*. An important list of the Crimean dignitaries recorded in the peace instrument dated 1507 constitutes a starting point for posing deeply thought-provoking, though equally highly specific questions on the number and hierarchy of the *qaraçi beys*. The author does not provide any answers nor does he discuss the subject further although these issues are at least partially described in the Crimean historical chronicles<sup>2</sup> and scholarly literature. It seems that the author could either have summarised the most important results of the

<sup>2</sup> *Tāriḥ-i Şāḥib Giray Hān (Histoire de Sahib Giray, Khan de Crimée de 1532 à 1551)*, ed. Özalp Gökbilgin (Ankara, 1973), 112 (French trans., p. 245); Seyyid Muhammed Rıza, *Es-seb'ü's-seyyar fi ahbari muluki Tatar*, ed. Mirza Kazembek (Kazan, 1832), 93. The later chronicler stated that Khan Sahib I Giray (1532–51) elevated the Mangıts and Sedjevüts to the status of the *qaraçıs*.

related studies or skip the entire passage on number increase amongst the *qaraçı beys*, if he cares not to explore the understudied area of Crimean domestic relations. Perhaps, a short description of the vital Crimean institutions and their evolution in the early modern period placed at the beginning of Part I could be a more straightforward way to familiarise the readers with these unknown terms. Moreover, such a solution would make it possible to easily check an unknown term found in other sections of the study instead of looking for scattered pieces of information in the entire volume. Room for such an introductory section in Part I could have been found at the expense of the details of diplomatic missions such as number and names of their members or the routes they travelled. Part II contains special sections on these subjects (pp. 452–70). Moreover, details on diplomatic organisation interrupt the narration and make it more difficult to focus on the very important general remarks on relations between Poland, Lithuania and the Khanate.

One of the most interesting and far reaching comments is to be found almost immediately upon reading. Kołodziejczyk proposes to acknowledge the legal claims of the Girays to the heritage of the Golden Horde (p. 11). Therefore, the author perceives the Khanate as a successful survivor of the Chingisid empire rather than a polity of nomads deprived of a rich cultural and political heritage. By no means is this to say that the author underestimates the evolution of the Khanate in the early modern period, rooted in Ottoman influences and in the global change of the balance of power. Such an approach results in a new understanding of the Khanate's relations with neighbouring states, both Christian and Muslim. Taking seriously the Mongol heritage provides new insight into Tatar political goals as well as their role in shaping and maintaining the balance of power in the Black Sea Region and Eastern Europe. Additionally, it makes it possible to tell a different story on the mechanics of diplomacy between Poland-Lithuania and the Khanate.

In Part II, in carefully unearthing information and bringing together disparate account, as well as comparing Tatar relations with Poland-Lithuania with those of other neighbouring states, the author reconstructs and explains the diplomatic procedures effective in mutual relations. His skilful investigation of the preserved historical sources gives us a comprehensive and fascinating study on a variety of details reflecting mutual relations such as the number and ranks of envoys sent in the missions, the shape and colours used in the documents or the differences between the formulas contained in diplomatic correspondence. Detailed analyses of each peace instrument and the circumstances of its delivery lead to general conclusions on each state's diplomatic procedures and their evolution within the early modern period. It also depicts changes in mutual relations and the international position of each state.

Part III is where the study shines. It consists of seventy-one documents published in the original languages i.e., Khwarezmian Turkic, a mixture of Crimean Tatar and Ottoman Turkish, Italian, Ruthenian, Polish and Latin.

Documents preserved in more exotic languages are skillfully translated into English. Thus, a wide circle of readers have access to the documents issued by the Crimean and Polish-Lithuanian chancelleries. Moreover, it is a great pleasure to read the author's translations, which have retained the very unusual language of the documents, sometimes of even a lyrical quality. Taking this all into account, Kołodziejczyk should be congratulated for single-handedly embarking on what usually requires team work, and accomplishing it with such exactitude.

Finally, one should praise the author's use of a variety of sources together with a rich bibliography not only on Poland-Lithuania and the Khanate but also on the whole Black Sea Region. If one could find any shortcomings in his use of sources, it would be some inconsequence in the usage of the Crimean chronicles. This is clearly visible on the example of the chronicle of Seyyid Muhammed Riza. As has already been mentioned, Kołodziejczyk does not rely on his account while referring to the increase in number of the *qaraçı beys*. Such an approach might be understood taking into account that the chronicler from the eighteenth-century described events dating back to the first half of the sixteenth century. That said in referring to the introduction of the custom of preceding the khan's name with the sultan's name in the invocation pronounced during the Muslim Friday prayer dated to the 1580s, Kołodziejczyk follows unquestionably the account of Seyyid Muhammed Riza (p. 106). It remains unclear why the author blindly trusts the chronicler in the later case and totally ignores his description in the previous one. As was mentioned above, this is not to say that the author's bibliography is poor or one-sided. However, sometimes the author resigns from using the most suitable source to support his statements. This is clearly visible in the description of the fascinating issue of Italians in the Crimean diplomatic service. Kołodziejczyk discusses to what extent Gianantonio Spinola, one of the most active Crimean diplomats in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, knew Italian. Basing himself on various sources, he concludes that Spinola perhaps did not even know the language, certainly not its written form (p. 458). However, in discussing this problem the author does not use the account of Julien Bordier, a French diplomat, who visited the Crimea in 1607. Bordier, who had met Spinola, noted that the latter could not say a word in Italian.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps, the author could use the account of this French traveller to support his thesis concerning someone's command of a Romance language.

To sum up, this study is a valuable and most welcome contribution to scholarship, and adds significantly to our knowledge in several fields.

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<sup>3</sup> Jean-Louis Bacqué-Grammont, 'Un voyageur périgourden sur les rives de la mer Noire au temps d'Henri IV', in Faruk Bilici, Ionel Candea and Anca Popescu (eds.), *Enjeux politiques, économiques et militaires en mer Noire (XIVe-XXIe siècles), études à la mémoire de Mihail Guboglu* (Braila, 2007), 113–14.

The book will be useful for anyone studying the politics of Eastern Europe and the Black Sea Region, essential for researchers into the history and language of Slavic and Turkic peoples. Certainly, it will be required reading for scholars focusing on diplomatic history and anthropologists examining differences between nomadic and sedentary societies. Additionally, the book offers valuable remarks on Crimean-Ottoman relations and thus contributes to the study of empires and their relations with peripheries. Last but not least, the volume is a treasure-trove of moving stories and information on the imaginary world of these early modern peoples. To illustrate this, the Crimean peace instruments from the end of the sixteenth century contain the following picturesque description of good neighbouring relations: 'if an orphan, a widow, or ragged beggars were to travel between the two countries wearing golden crowns on their heads, they would not experience any harm or damage from anybody' (pp. 773, 781-2).

Natalia Królikowska

Janusz Szczepański (ed.), *Dzieje Mazowsza*, vol. 3: *Lata 1795–1918* [The History of Mazovia, 1795–1918], Pułtusk, 2012, Akademia Humanistyczna im. Aleksandra Gieysztora, Oficyna Wydawnicza ASPRA-JR, 902 pp.

Mazovia has until recently remained not covered by synthetic studies in the history of the 'historic lands' of Poland-of-yore. There have appeared several multivolume collective works such as *Historia Śląska* [A history of Silesia] (1963–85) – 7 vols. covering the period till 1918, plus a more recent (2002) one-volume synthetic work; *Historia Pomorza* [A history of Pomerania] (1969–2003) – 10 vols., till 1918. There have been more concise synthetic works, such as *Dzieje Wielkopolski* [A history of Greater Poland] – 2 vols. (1969–73) or *Dzieje Lubelszczyzny* [A history of Lublin Land] – 2 vols. (1974–9). These works have been prepared by large research teams, numbering at times several dozen scholars, with endeavours made by dedicated sections or units of the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences to coordinate their work – as in the Silesia and Pomerania projects. Their effort was accompanied by, more or less formal, discussions, some of them having surfaced in print. The usual complaint was about failing efforts to render the texts, written by varying authors, unified, and about scarce polyhistorians available with an ability to bear by themselves the load of several centuries' legacy and output, and to present it in a homogenous form.

Among the editors and authors were some of the most outstanding scholars of their generation – to name, by way of example: Marian Biskup,

Józef Chlebowczyk, Gerard Labuda, Stanisław Salmonowicz, or Jerzy Topolski. It would not be an easy task to compare those projects against one another, as they differed not only in size but, to an extent, also in concept. The chronological caesurae could have varied, in line with the historic rhythm of individual provinces. Some of those books would offer extended bibliographical documentation and critical apparatus, whilst others had their footnotes reduced to the necessary minimum, doing without a bibliography. There appeared fragments compiled based upon detailed research, using archival resources and hitherto-unexploited printed sources, and resembling monographs rather than synthetic studies. In other cases, the foundations were provided by available partial studies, including earlier reference literature. It was no coincidence that the initiators and editors of the volumes prepared in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s did not haste to embark on researching into the most recent history of the individual lands, preferring instead to conclude their narration at the year 1939, if not 1918. A different decision made for the history of Lublin Land, which extends to the first decades of the People's Republic of Poland, has led to an unsatisfactory outcome, putting it mildly – even if the time-and-place circumstances are accounted for.

Mazovia's turn came rather late, although the fittings had been going on for several decades. This earlier-date initiative started being delivered only in a time when it has proved difficult to establish formalised teams with a long-time-functioning prospect. Yet, the time so consumed has not gone for waste, owing to a systematic development of detailed research. The history of the lands situated within a radius of ca. 120–180 kilometres off Warsaw has systematically been dealt with by establishments and milieus old and new – just to name the Mazovian Scientific Research Centre (Mazowiecki Ośrodek Badań Naukowych); the newly-established tertiary schools in Pułtusk, Łowicz, Siedlce, and Płock; science societies in Płock and Łomża, etc. Specialist periodicals, such as *Rocznik Mazowiecki* annual or *Notatki Płockie* quarterly have not ceased to be issued on a regular basis. Lastly, doctoral or postdoctoral theses, forming more or less valuable contributions to the region's historiography, have numbered several hundreds. Numerous scientific conferences, at which the results of recent studies and researches are presented, appearing for most part in print thereafter, deserve mention as well.

The uneasy design to initiate and complete an exhaustive multivolume synthetic monograph has been undertaken by the Aleksander Gieysztor Academy of Humanities in Pułtusk. The first volume, edited by Henryk Samsonowicz and covering the early history of Mazovia, until incorporated in the Crown, was released in 2006 (a revised version of a 1994 publication, issued outside of the series and titled *Dzieje Mazowsza do roku 1526* [A history of Mazovia before 1526], with a significant contribution of Aleksander Gieysztor). 2010 saw publication of volume 4 (Janusz Szczepański (ed.), *Dzieje Mazowsza 1918–1939*). The most recent issue is volume 3, on which some reflections

follow hereafter. Volume 2, covering the modern era, and volume 5, dealing with World War II, the People's Republic of Poland and, probably, the Third Polish Republic (in existence for almost quarter a century now) are still awaited by the readers.

The volume on the nineteenth-century history of Mazovia is somewhat traditional a book; constructed and written very reliably, it meets any and all requirements of the historical research methodology. Most of its authors prove to be the most experienced researchers who have spent their mature lives dealing with the history of Mazovia, their abilities proven with the abundant original outputs to their credit. The title given to the volume heralds a comprehensive exposition; yet, the careful reader will spot certain gaps due, possibly, to no experts available for certain specific issues or refusal by some to cooperate. The whole thing comprises fifteen chapters, adequately arranged in a chronological-and-subject order. The book opens by a competent presentation, by the volume editor Janusz Szczepański, of the sources for the history of Mazovia. However, there is no review provided of the reference literature, whose critical profile would be so much of use for zealous lovers of the region or even for beginner researchers.

The chapters concerning politics and culture between the seizure of Mazovia by the Prussian rule and the January Insurrection (1863–4; inclusive) are compiled by Aleksander Kociszewski, who has made use of the main existing studies (incl. authored by himself, primarily, on the Duchy of Warsaw period) and, on several occasions, of other printed sources, encrusting his narrative with skilfully selected quotations. The wartime/insurrection episodes are presented a little too comprehensively, to my mind, while the proposed depiction of culture appears a bit too-abridged; this area is overall approached in a 'classical' manner, as a rather narrow concept.

The society and the economy of Mazovia in 1815–64 are discussed, also somewhat too-synthetically, by Radosław Waleszczak. This chapter highlights the agricultural transformations related to new cultivations and the agrarian reform, also mentioning the beginnings of the produce processing industry, as manifested by first sugar mills. An emphasis is put on the diversity of Mazovian rural areas, caused by natural conditions, along with farming methods applied: the wealthiest villages could be found in the vicinity of Łowicz and Kutno, whilst much poorer ones existed on unfertile soils in the north-eastern edge of the region. The urbanisation process, slow-progressing as it was, is depicted in a series of tables; a vast majority of towns, smaller or bigger, continued to function as traditional handicraft and small-scale-trading hubs, oriented toward, and supplying, local markets. The discussion of the social and national structure encompasses rather broadly the position and role of the Jews, who as a rule accounted for 50 per cent, if not more, of the urban population. It is at this point that the results of the recently-animated studies on the vicissitudes of this particular group become evident, and made use of.

The history of education between the Third Partition and the January Insurrection is discussed in considerable amount of detail, with the two dedicated chapters written by Marian Chudzyński (secondary education) and Józef Barański (elementary education). Again, worth our attention is the inclusion of Jewish, as well as Evangelical, education system. Explicit tables provided specify the numbers of educational centres and their attending students. The authors have expertly combined the thread of partitioner authorities' policy applied across the Kingdom of Poland and its consequences perceptible within the Mazovia area. Yet, the reader might still claim that the not-too-expanded general conclusions be broadened. Instead, mentions of secondary-level students' activity with patriotic conspiratorial ventures and insurgent combats have not been neglected, thus corresponding with the chapter authored by A. Kociszewski.

The political life of Mazovia between 1865 and 1914 is discussed by Janusz Szczepański. A detailed characteristic of the Russian power apparatus, enabled by the research and publications of the recent years, proves a considerably strong point of this chapter. The political attitudes of the individual groups of the Mazovian society are shown in an interesting way, with not only diarist accounts but also public-prosecutor files and secret-police reports being taken into account. The occurrences of the Revolution of 1905–7, quite well known otherwise, are dealt with a great deal. A novelty, seemingly, is the proposed reconstruction of underground activities of the Polish Socialist Party – Revolutionary Faction, alongside other radical formations active in later years, prevalently deemed to be a period of quietness and stabilisation forced through the governmental terror. The thing is that, all in all, lack of large industrial centres where workmen would have clustered (apart from Żyrardów, perhaps) resulted in revolutionary actions being dispersed and rather weak. The National Democracy enjoyed much greater support in the area in question; its doings past 1905, quite apparent as they were, are also described in detail in the book, as is the clearly increasing activity of the Catholic Church.

The chapter titled 'Społeczeństwo i gospodarka Mazowska w latach 1865–1914' [Mazovian society and economy, 1865–1914], by Adam Dobroński, deserves special attention. The relevant statistical data – particularly, the 1897 general-census information – has been made a penetrating and innovative use of. Dobroński daringly outlines the progressing diversification, singling out and describing the emerging sub-regions of non-uniform national structure, different economic and, consequently, social – and, to an extent, cultural profile. The influence of administration centres and military garrisons is taken into account – along with that of railway lines, then under construction, as a plain aspect. New industrial plants – quite numerous, in sum, but normally rather small and satisfying the local needs, in most cases – are covered as well. An evident progress in the rural economy is remarked – having occurred in



spite of the agrarian crisis, a little aggrandised, perhaps, in the earlier historiographic research. Between 1876 and 1913, the three Mazovian *guberniyas* saw the basic arable crop harvest rates increased several times, as coupled with significant achievements in animal breeding (p. 523). If we were to ‘dot the i’s and cross the t’s’, we should say that the people grew wealthier, owing, among other factors, to migrations to towns and offshore emigrations. It is obvious that the continually-enormous scale of backwardness and modernisation processes going on very slowly would not make one overoptimistic, and risk any too-far-fetched generalisations. The chapter by Dobroński is, all in all, an example of ‘a skill of, so to put it, lacelike interweaving of sources of most diverse provenance: be it Polish or foreign; leftist or rightist; patriotic or partitioner’s – so as to reconstruct a coherent image based thereupon’, as Stefan Kieniewicz once expressed it.<sup>1</sup>

The volume under discussion comprises no section on education between the January Insurrection and World War I. A separate, and interesting, discussion is provided on the healthcare problems (by Marta Milewska). Andrzej Stawarz very expertly draws a picture of the epoch’s cultural life. Out of the boscage of societies and associations, fire brigades, libraries, reading rooms and various private ventures, he has managed to extract the major threads of the development of readership, otherwise modest; music-making, mostly amateur; holding of incidental celebrations and theatrical performances. As opposed to a number of earlier studies, the author does not neglect the role of an alien authority that pursued its own cultural policy, which usually – though not always indeed – led to Russification and was rejected by the society’s majority (see e.g. subchapter ‘State holidays in the public space’, pp. 614–15). This authority determined the framework of the grassroots social initiatives which appeared after 1905 on a clearly larger scale than before. The chapter in question, as is the case with some of the other chapters, lacks a comparative perspective, to an extent. While it is clearly uneasy to measure the ‘true’ social and cultural activity of the individual regions of the Kingdom, the numbers of relevant societies can be broken down and compared, based e.g. on the (imperfect yet useful) study by Wojciech Jaworski.<sup>2</sup>

A concise chapter on the Catholic Church was penned by the renowned specialist, the Rev. Michał Marian Grzybowski. Its content encompasses the entire partition and national-bondage age, until 1918, testifying to the values of such a depiction, ‘overriding’ the inner caesuras. ‘Long duration’ phenomena and processes, not in each case dependent on the tsarist regime’s policy, have thus become shown. A register of Płock and Warsaw bishops has

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<sup>1</sup> Stefan Kieniewicz, ‘O sobie i o historii’, in Andrzej Szwarz (ed.), *Stefan Kieniewicz i jego dziedzictwo w polskiej historiografii* (Warsaw, 2010), 284.

<sup>2</sup> Wojciech Jaworski, *Przemiany legalnego życia społecznego w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1864–1914* (Sosnowiec, 2006).

been included, with a brief profile of many of them, including their output as authors. Some relevant statistics on monastic convents is also quoted. A lot is said, expectedly, of harassments and persecutions, particularly as the aftermath of the January Insurrection, alongside successful attempts at replacing the old forms of organisation and priesthood with novel ones, such as secret habitless orders. A considerable number of newly-built churches, mostly brick, often overly grandiose ones, was clearly a success; in late nineteenth/early twentieth century, such edifices assumed then-en-vogue neo-Gothic forms. A meticulous tabular breakdown on p. 657 indicates that their number totalled 285, of which more than a half was erected past 1863. This outcome partly resulted – let us add – from increased population, economic and social emancipation of peasants and their religious zeal, as combined with the already-mentioned relative increase in the affluence of rural areas.

Historical studies embracing the ‘extended’ nineteenth century and the WW I period usually deal with warfare occurrences somewhat offhandedly. Here, the picture is converse, since as many as three chapters, running 123 pages in total, focus on this subject-matter. The first, on the warfare itself, is definitely too detailed and extremely focused on the facts. The second and the third – i.e. ‘Political and economic aspects of the German occupation in Mazovia’ (by Jacek Szczepański) and ‘The Mazovian society facing the WW I developments’ (by Janusz Szczepański), respectively – ought to be deemed fully satisfactory, as they reflect thorough knowledge of the local specificity and offer a broad, general perspective.

The volume is concluded by the chapter ‘Architecture and the arts in Mazovia, 1795–1918’, by Ryszard Małowiecki. It deals to only a small extent with transformations of the cultural landscape and pathways of spatial development of the region’s towns; still, the author is an exquisite expert in the field, as testified to by his existing output. What the reader has indeed received is a systematic review of important architectural, painting, sculpture and artistic-craft works, made in line with the stylistic conventions subsequently prevailing in nineteenth and in the early twentieth century.

Virtually none of those works can be deemed outstanding; innovative were they not, either. Yet, their sources of inspiration are aptly identified, and the efforts aiming at imbuing the local art with national characteristics or ‘spirit’, visible especially on the turn of twentieth century, are shown. It is worth noting that the ‘nationality’ aspect was sought for in a variety of styles and forms – from neo-classicist manors and neo-gothic churches, also drawing upon the native tradition, through to folk motifs applied in art-nouveau polychromes.

Now, let us express more general remarks, with elements of criticism. First of all, neither the authors nor the editor responsible for the volume as a whole take any account of the history of Warsaw. This is partly explainable, as the capital town clearly dominated the region in that period, and a full

consideration of this perspective would require that a completely different book have been written. Let us notice, though, that the aforementioned historical monographs of Pomerania, Greater Poland or Silesia do provide systematic descriptions of the role of Gdańsk, Poznań, or Wrocław. Clearly, a complete exclusion of Warsaw-related threads would be impossible, and the name 'Warsaw' appears on as many as 293 pages – mostly, however, as an occasional mention (except perhaps for the arts chapter). What the reader would be after is, instead, more expanded reflections on mutual associations between the capital city and its closer or more distant background, in the spheres of economy, politics, social life, and culture. This issue is separately considered by Adam Dobroński, who rightly states (p. 439) as follows:

The Mazovian genesis of Warsaw cannot be challenged; it is unfair to artificially separate Warsaw from its indigenous region. ... Discussing it [i.e. Warsaw] together with the other counties and towns of Mazovia would [however] prevent us from determining and examining the actual problems characteristic to the area in question.

It nonetheless seems that the nineteenth-century Warsaw–Mazovia relations could have been covered by a separate concise essay complementing the preceding chapters. It could have included local elites' opinions on the capital town, alongside the images of Mazovia drawn from the Warsaw perspective.<sup>3</sup> Of use would also be statistical comparisons, illustrating e.g. the proportions of the population, the volumes of industrial production or trade flows in the subsequent decades.

The other comment, partly related with the preceding one, is not easy to phrase. Speaking colloquially, one could say that this history of Mazovia is not, well, Mazovian in spirit to a satisfactory extent. This is not just about the specificity of the local folk culture – this aspect is mentioned, very concisely, by Andrzej Stawarz (pp. 577–8). Apart from scarce exceptions, no room was provided for high-culture creative artists and intellectuals of a Mazovian background, attached, more or less, to the land. Frédéric Chopin appears in this book twice, in the context of members of 'Lutnia' Singing Society once performing his songs in Łowicz. Nothing is said of Cyprian K. Norwid; Zygmunt Krasiński appears thrice, mostly as the proprietor of Opinogóra estate. Omission of the 'arch-Mazovian' poet Teofil Lenartowicz, whose output has been evoked from time to time in connection with attempts at creating the regional identity, is hard to understand. Multiple examples

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<sup>3</sup> I have once devoted an article to these matters, taking into account, to a considerable degree, Mazovia-related source material; cf. Andrzej Szwarz, 'Inteligencja warszawska i prowincjonalna w świetle własnych opinii z lat powojennych (próba sondażu)', in Ryszarda Czepulis-Rastenis (ed.), *Inteligencja polska XIX i XX wieku*. *Studia*, iii (Warsaw, 1983), 187–214.

could have been quoted of nineteenth century versions of local legends and historic episodes in literature and journalism, as well as of displaying collective remembrance sites and signs in the field. The recall of a stage in the biography of Maria Skłodowska-Curie, who spent more than two years as a private instructor at a manor in northern Mazovia, should be deemed somewhat disputable.

The above observations mostly concern wilful émigrés or compulsory refugees who pursued their careers somewhere else, contributing not only to a local or national but sometimes, general-human achievements. Remaining within the field-of-vision are, mostly, those active 'in situ' and willingly processing 'local' themes (e.g. Józef Chelmoński, covered in the chapter on the arts by Ryszard Małowicki). I am not certain whether such criterion is correct. Signalling the said issues and vicissitudes of those figures, mentioned by way of example, would obviously not alter the image of the province – poor and incapable of rivalling the metropolitan environments, as it was. Still, the image could have been somewhat retouched. Again, rather than a chapter 'riddled with facts', I would welcome for such purpose a freestyle essay, not being a paean in praise of the great sons of the Land of Mazovia, and its industrious people.

The undersigned is expressing these afterthoughts not without remorse. I have namely rejected the proposal to contribute to this collective volume, giving as the reason no detailed studies on the history of Mazovia done to my own credit, and the constraining burden of my earlier-assumed obligations. Still, I could have given friendly, helpful advice or consultation to the authors and/or the editor, to a more or less considerable extent, which would probably have caused the threads of interest to be indicated: Mazovia–Warsaw relations in various dimensions; Mazovian themes in the output of artists native of Mazovia; the ways along which the local collective memory has been shaped. Otherwise, it is conceivable that the essays I am postulating may be included in the last volume planned in the series, all the more that they ought to encompass – as far as practicable – the nineteenth century along with the twentieth.

All these reservations and desiderates cannot undermine my positive evaluation of the undertaking in question. What we are facing is an admirable outcome of research, scholarly, and writing effort. The relevant pieces of information, by far dispersed across thousands of monographs or articles, have now been meticulously selected, compiled and furnished with commentaries, thus altogether creating a new quality. The phenomena and processes identifiable for Mazovia have mostly been rendered in their broader contexts – in relation to the history of other Polish lands in the age of partition and national bondage. Using a set phrase, to say that the book 'fills a gap' is to hit the mark, in this specific case.

Jerzy W. Borejsza (ed.), *The Crimean War 1853–1856: Colonial Skirmish or Rehearsal for World War? Empires, Nations, and Individuals*, Warszawa, 2011, Instytut Historii PAN, Wydawnictwo Neriton, 536 pp., index, ills.

This comprehensive volume, edited by an outstanding Warsaw historian, is a late offspring of an international research project on the Crimean War of 1853–6 as a ‘confrontation between civilisations’. A few years before, a book was published in Polish which dealt with the ways in which the conflict in question affected the history of Poland.<sup>1</sup> The perspective is much broader this time, and the abundance of the issues the book covers is commanding.

The present volume is composed of twenty-five articles and an addendum, compiled by Grzegorz P. Bąbiak, comprising illustrations to the articles of the Crimean War originally published in *L'illustration* weekly. The authors represent differing national historiographies and varied methodological traditions. Hence, the volume’s intellectual cohesion calls for being appreciated all the more. A few great themes are predominant, starting with the War’s influence on modernisation of the Ottoman Empire and Russia. In his description of the recruiting strategies in the Ottoman Army, Tobias Hinzelmann focuses on the not-quite-unproblematic struggle and trading-off between tradition and modernity. The ‘Europeanisation’ which consisted in imposing the conscription could not ignore the tradition; in some cases, as with the attempt at ‘modernising’ the recruitment of the Albanians, it had to withdraw, making room for the tradition. Candan Badem analyses this same phenomenon, using another example – the problems with putting into effect the draft among the Christian community. As aptly noticed by Cevdet Pasha, a member of the commission for conscription of the Christians established on the sultan’s order, ‘an Ottoman commander used religious feelings and martyrdom for Islam to encourage his soldiers into action. What would the major of a mixed battalion say to spur his soldiers into battle?’ (p. 83). As is known, the issue of no alternative source of legitimisation available was solved only half a century later by the Young Turks movement. The difficulties rooted in the French and British pressures to render the Empire ‘civilised’ are dealt with Yusuf Hakan Erdem. The Ottoman state ceased trading in white slaves not without tradition-based resistance: the Caucasian tribes had been selling their kinsmen for centuries, and the religiously motivated abolitionist zeal of the Western-European diplomats was not capable to bring about a change at once.

A broader view of modernisation is offered by the volume’s closing articles, by Ivan Roussev and Andrzej Nieuważny. Roussev’s starting point

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<sup>1</sup> Jerzy W. Borejsza and Grzegorz P. Bąbiak (eds.), *Polacy i ziemie polskie w dobie wojny krymskiej* (Warsaw, 2008).

is a description of the circumstances in which the Ottoman Empire's first telegraphic line was started up, while our attention is also drawn to the development of the railway or healthcare systems. The list of phenomena generated or accelerated by the war is complemented by Nieuważny with the intelligence services, and a commissariat reform in the conflicting armies; all this being, as Roussev points out with a tint of irony, *grâce à la guerre* (p. 486).

Modernisation is also the central issue for the numerous texts dealing with the history of Russia. Leonid Gorizontov describes in his comprehensive article an increase in social mobility and nationalisation of broad classes of people as the phenomena strictly connected with the Crimean War. The Russian defeat, in turn, has long now been associated with unsatisfactory modernisation of the Empire. The reforms of the Russian state in the latter half of 1850s and in the early 1860s came out as indirect confirmation of this diagnosis.

The nationalisation of the tsarist Russia's society, associated with the modernisation impulse triggered by the Crimean War, had dramatic consequences to its Muslim inhabitants. These are mostly covered by Vladimir Bobrovnikov and Hakan Kirimli, with the topic reappearing in Gorizontov's article and, marginally, in several others. The war the Islamic Turkey fought with Russia confronted the Crimean Tartars and several other nationalities in the Empire with a loyalty conflict, which as a rule tended to be resolved to the benefit of Islam. The reverse side of this situation was state-driven and grassroots violence against the Russian Muslims, which accelerated the otherwise increasing immigration into the Ottoman Empire. Kirimli points out that the much more numerous later-date emigrations from Russia indirectly resulted from the mid-century occurrences. The Crimean War namely sowed the seeds of reciprocal distrust between the tsarist Orthodox and Muslim subjects, a resentment that is still alive. In parallel, as Bobrovnikov argues, the Caucasian tribes commanded by Shamil, having for several dozens of years fought their war against Russia the moment Crimea was invaded, were nothing of a submissive instrument in the hands of the High Porte. The position they displayed was autonomous, as testified to by their not getting involved in any actions supporting the allied forces in Crimea.

The long-lasting conflict between the Russian/Orthodox majority and the Empire's Muslim minorities is part of another great story touched upon in the book. Most of the authors do not confine themselves to analysing the mid-nineteenth-century historical occurrences but follow them up with their later-date reception, interpretation, and commemoration. This interest is manifested most elementarily in the reviews of the national historiographies' output concerning the Crimean War. The article by Veniamin Ciobanu, describing the major interpretative lines of the Romanian historiography, is one of such kind; a similar approach is found in Carlo Ghisalberti's article on the Italian historiography. Two other, Russian, authors have taken a somewhat

different approach: Vladislav I. Grosul analyses the Russian public opinion's position assumed in the course of the War, making references to political disputes as well as to literary polemics. Collective memory is the focus for Olga Pavlenko: while dealing with waves of interest in the War in the Russian historiography, she also describes a monumentalisation and heroisation of the War within the public space.

A few case studies complementing the state of the art add colour to the volume. This category includes the biographical articles: on Ömer Pasha Lattas by Markus Koller, and on Sadyk Pasza/Mehmet Sadık Paşa (Michał Czajkowski) by Candan Badem. (Sadyk Pasza also appears in a short article by Paweł Wierzbicki, which however offers no back-matter and no new information of interest.) Definitely of interest, particularly to anyone genuinely interested in the book's subject-matter, is an analysis of Turkish correspondence of Marco-Antonio Canini originally published in the Piedmont periodical *L'Opinione*, carried out by Francesco Guido. The attitude of the society of the Kingdom of Sardinia toward a distant conflict to which their army was sent away is covered by Giuseppe Cossuto. Éric Anceau analyses French parliamentary debates accompanying the warfare. Special attention is deserved by the article written by Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, finding the 'lost' liberal tradition of the Ottoman political thought in a work by Mustafa Djelaleddin Pasha (Konstanty Borzęcki), a Polish émigré. His *Les Turcs anciens et modernes*, published 1869, is usually considered groundbreaking for the Young Turks movement. Yet, Kołodziejczyk offers a completely different interpretation whereby Mustafa Djelaleddin's ideology should be regarded as an unused opportunity to create within the Turkish empire a West-European nationalism, in its liberal variety.

The last of the central issues that reappear across several texts is the military history. This domain is recently undergoing a genuine renaissance, discovering topics that have mostly remained marginal or completely absent. Also *The Crimean War* tells us relatively very little on troop movements or firearms calibres. The authors are fond of other issues: Andrew Lambert explains the basic differences between the strategic culture of Britain, France and Russia. As the latter two countries were seeking resolutions to conflicts in the battlefield, it sufficed for the British to take rapid action at the enemy's weakest spot. This strategic culture was practically applied in the course of the Baltic campaign, an episode which did not enjoy much attention as it went on and afterwards, among the authors describing it. Lambert however is of opinion that the direct threat posed to St Petersburg not only influenced the Russian party's decision to put an end to the war but also, on the longer run, incited the Bolsheviks to move the administrative centre deeper into the country. François Roth offers a slightly different perception of a similar problem. His analysis of the influence of the Crimean War's experiences on the French army during the conflict with Prussia in 1870–71 is striking with

its interesting ascertainment whereby the conflict with Russia had retarded the French strategic culture. Roth goes as far as mentioning a quasi-medieval approach to war-front heroism, and comes to an astonishing conclusion that there are arguments to state that the victorious French learned a lesson from the Russians defeated in Crimea, rather than conversely (p. 417). Characteristic to more recent research in military and warfare history is Michael Hinton's well-documented study on healthcare provided to British sailors.

Jerzy W. Borejsza, the volume editor, highlights in the introductory section that the Crimean War was of a breakthrough nature, in several respects. Although not quite strongly represented in historiography and, with scarce exceptions, in the collective memory, this War has accelerated globalisation of world politics and modernisation of many domains of life. The War was also an impulse for Jan Gotlib Bloch who warned the international public opinion against a nearing total war. Being a collective book, *The Crimean War* provides in much a coherent fashion convincing evidence to support these observations. The multiplicity of themes and perspectives is subject to a few keynotes – the great subject-matters I have mentioned above. Also, the work in question reports the current trends in international historiography, albeit, logically, it cannot offer a comprehensive picture of all the relevant issues and methodological positions.

It would certainly be a good idea to present e.g. the output of Crimean War historiography in all the countries it has had an impact on, or, a multilateral comparison of strategic cultures and military traditions of all the parties involved in the conflict in question. These requirements are not to be posed to an extensive and versatile material of the sort presented in the volume under discussion; instead, these are postulates for future research. The only element of real importance that is so evidently missing, particularly in the context of the most recent studies on other great conflicts, is gender issues. The fact is that females (not only Florence Nightingale, whose appearance is rather marginal) participated in many occurrences described in the book, but there is more to the story. In the discursive stratum, 'womanhood' was an important aspect of description of, and interpretative tool useful with, Russia as well as the Ottoman Empire, especially the Balkan provinces of the latter.

The other objections are not content-related but practical. As is noted in the introduction, the decision to publish six Russian articles in the original was justified by an earlier publication of three of them elsewhere in English; it was also said that anyone seriously interested in the Crimean War ought to have at least a basic command of Russian. Even if we accept this explanation, the book, bearing an English title, still contains seven articles in French and one in Italian. This unfortunately does not contribute to the volume's richness but is a limitation as it significantly restricts the group of readers potentially willing to use it. The volume's composition is not most fortunate too: the editors decided to mechanically group the content by the article's



language. Instead, a thematic grouping would enable to better bring out the associations between the articles, thus clearly articulating the major advantage of the volume edited by Jerzy W. Borejsza – that is, intellectual coherence and a convincing and colourful image of the ‘global’ war.

trans. *Tristan Korecki*

*Maciej Górny*

Carl Christian Wahrmann, Martin Buchsteiner and Antje Strahl (eds.), *Seuche und Mensch. Herausforderung in den Jahrhunderten. Ergebnisse der internationalen Tagung vom 29.–31. Oktober 2010 in Rostock*, Berlin, 2012, Duncker & Humblot, 448 pp.; series: *Historische Forschungen*, 95

Three hundred years ago, between 1708 and 1713/14, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and a considerable portion of the central and northern Europe experienced a disastrous epidemic of pestilence. There were 7,223 killed reported for Cracow alone in 1708–10, with 12,047 fatal victims recorded in the town’s vicinity. According to the contemporary messages, exaggerated as they probably were, Warsaw saw as many as 30,000 buried in 1708–11. In Gdańsk, the 1709 plague killed 24,533 people – a third of the city’s population, of which 90–93 per cent fell victim to the pest, as reliable sources have it. In Elbląg, 2,442 to 4,202 were buried in 1709–10, depending on the source. As estimated by researchers, the Commonwealth has lost as much as a fourth of its population during the pestilence gnawing in the Great Northern War period; in towns alone, the loss went up to 50 per cent. The studies made by Andrzej Karpiński<sup>1</sup> have shown, though, that the factual population losses for Poland are hard to assess, which holds true also for an estimation within the frame of the neighbouring countries; the point is, modern comparative studies would still be definitely in demand, to enable more precise determinations.

Pestilence, smallpox, cholera, AIDS at the turn of twenty-first century, the course of the diseases, and their varied effects – demographic, economic, political, religious, mentality-related, have since long ago excited practitioners, i.e. epidemiologists, preachers, chroniclers, some of whom observed and described the development of the occurrences as they went on, and their own experiences and impressions. This is one of the crucial themes involving historians of various fields of expertise – demographers, medicine historians,

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<sup>1</sup> Andrzej Karpiński, *W walce z niewidzialnym wrogiem. Epidemie chorób zakaźnych w Rzeczypospolitej w XVI-XVIII wieku i ich następstwa demograficzne, społeczno-ekonomiczne i polityczne* (Warsaw, 2000) contains a coverage of reference literature.

religious scientists, through to ethnographers. Yet, it has often occurred that, in spite of the vast amounts of studies, we often do not have appropriate tools at our disposal to properly describe plague as a social phenomenon. Hence the reappearing efforts aiming at compiling a new questionnaire that would take into account the new research needs.

The anniversary of the pestilence prowling across Europe 300 years ago provided a stimulus encouraging such initiatives; one result is the volume under review, being a collection of papers delivered at a conference held in Rostock in 2010. It was not the only such undertaking to commemorate the plague; another occasional volume devoted to the social history of this particular epidemic and other epidemics has been released in Gdańsk.<sup>2</sup>

As opposed to traditional studies on the effects of 'black death', three organisers of the Rostock conference, the volume editors, decided to do without a presentation of customary studies on demographic aspects or administrative measures preventing the dissemination of epidemic. Their intent was to gather works identifying diverse effects and reflections of the phenomenon in the arts, music, piety, social communication ('Vorwort', p. 5). The caesura for the texts collected is quite wide-fetched, spanning from fourteenth century till today. As for the geographies, the research observation area was meant to be the Baltic-Sea region and former German states; to be exact, there is one article each on France and Russia (by Heiko Pollmeier and Stefan Wiese, respectively) included. The broad thematic spectre defines the volume's significance but is its weak point at the same time: the collection generally lacks studies on phenomena occurring simultaneously in various terrains and mutually comparable for the environments affected, scale of the problem, methods applied by historians and conclusions produced.

There are twenty-two texts authored by scholars from five countries, mostly associated with German and (three) Polish institutions. Most of them represent a younger generation of scholars, some at the start of their career. The volume opens with an article by Matthias Heiduk ('Wiedergänger im Seuchendiskurs – Wechselwirkungen zwischen medizinischer Wissenschaft und Vampirmythos vom 18. bis zum 21. Jahrhundert', pp. 11–33), discussing the figures of ghosts or spectres and, in general, the role of the myth of vampires as alleged perpetrators of epidemics – the views appearing on the margin of medical discussion and in the popular culture since eighteenth century, until our day. As a reviewer, I should have expected a completely different text in this place: what we deal with is not a typical introductory article, showing e.g. the most recent research and present-day prospects for studies on the social history of epidemics, or, generally, techniques employed

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<sup>2</sup> Edmund Kizik (ed.), *Dżuma, ospa, cholera. W trzechsetną rocznicę wielkiej epidemii w Gdańsku i na ziemiach Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1708–1711* (Gdańsk, 2012).

in our contemporary history of medicine, but instead, a text which the editors found hard to classify. While not going deep down into M. Heiduk's remarks, interesting as they are, but not-too-revealing, they have, in my opinion, gone beyond the volume's subject-matter.

The remaining texts have been grouped into three main sections (in line with the territorial and chronological criteria): 'Die Pest im Ostseeraum', 'Seuchen im urbanen Umfeld' and 'Seuchen im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert'. The basic sections have been moreover divided, using the subject criterion, into smaller subsections; to make this review transparent, I will quit presenting each of them individually; although I find the editors' intention comprehensible, my personal impression is that an unwanted confusion has occurred as a result.

Within the chronological arrangement, three articles come first: Juliane Gatonski, 'Der lange Schatten des Schwarzen Todes – Die Folgen der Pest von 1347 bis 1353 für Bauernschaft, Adel und Klerus in Europa unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Skandinaviens' (pp. 37–50); Anna Mergner, "'Eyn sere grosse sterbunge der pestilencye". Die Pest im Deutschordensstaat von 1349 bis 1550' (pp. 51–75), and, Carl Christian Wahrmann, "'nachdem aber die nachricht eingelauffen, daß die contagion sich in Copenhagen u. in andern orten sehr ausgebreitet" – Gerüchte über die letzte Pestepidemie' (pp. 77–97). J. Gatonski's article on the social effects of the 'black death', with particular focus on Scandinavia, forms part of the author's bachelor thesis. Unfortunately, the reference literature specified therein comprises, for most part, general synthetic depictions; there are scarce references made to detailed monographic studies, not to mention source publications. Moreover, many comments are so banal that having this article published in this volume has probably not been satisfactorily thought over by the editors. Anna Mergner's text is more respectable; it provides a breakdown of firsthand mentions on the appearance of epidemics in Prussia and Livonia until mid-sixteenth century. Apart, however, from making use of a recent reference literature, Mergner has only used published sources whose majority has already been exploited in the research – just to refer to the basic breakdown compiled sixty years ago by Antoni Walawander.<sup>3</sup> It is a pity that the author is not knowledgeable of this valuable work. The reader's attention gets also focused on the awkward use of the term *Deutschordenstaat*, for the Teutonic-Order State was divided in as early as 1454 and subsequently, in 1525, ceased to exist at all (the article is contained within the timeframe of until mid-sixteenth c.). Thus, to be specific, Prussia and Livonia are actually covered. One more rectification: Prince Albrecht died during the pestilence epidemic ravaging

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<sup>3</sup> Antoni Walawander, *Kronika kłesk elementarnych w Polsce i w krajach sąsiednich w latach 1450–1586*, vol 1: *Zjawiska meteorologiczne i pomory* (Badania z Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych, 10, Lvov, 1932).

the country since summer 1567, but it was not the plague that caused his death (p. 53, fn. 11): the literature specifies the course of his illness as well as a description of the monarch's corpse's autopsy. Albrecht died in March 1568 resulting from pathological complications gnawing him since 1567 due to poorly treated wound in his leg. A much more mature research analysis is provided by Carl Christian Wahrmann, whose essay is wholly devoted to the circulation of information in the course of the 1708–13 plague. The article was written in connection with the author's doctoral thesis on the situation in towns of the south-western Baltic-Sea coast during the great plague period (under preparation). The nature of the information quoted is specified, there are abundant references made to archival sources (a wealth of administration authorities' correspondence), all supported by a reliable body of reference literature. Wahrmann's text is interesting and certainly forms an important contribution to our knowledge on the course of the epidemic.

The following section presents texts authored by the three Polish participants of the conference, being Germanists dealing with history of literature and music. These include articles by: Anna Mańko-Matysiak, on pestilence in prints of the Reformation period in Silesia, 'Zwischen Glaube und Wissensvermittlung. Auf den Spuren der Pest im Schlesien des Reformationszeitalters' (pp. 99–119); Liliana Górka, "'Die Pest der Seele' – Zur religiösen Pestbewältigung in Danzig 1709' (pp. 121–35); and Piotr Kociumbas, 'Das Repertoire von Pestliedern in den zu Danzig herausgegebenen deutschsprachigen Gesangbüchern des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts' (pp. 137–55). The text by L. Górka, dealing with the plague in Gdańsk preaching literature during the 1709 epidemic, and the one by P. Kociumbas, on seventeenth-eighteenth-century musical reminiscences of the pest in Gdańsk, are based on the earlier-published doctoral theses<sup>4</sup> and resume the issues partly presented in the aforesaid Gdańsk conference volume.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, L. Górka limited herself to printed literature, making no use of archival or manuscript materials, thus rendering the final conclusions impoverished.

The volume's second part bears a title [Plagues in urban environments] that proves little fortunate and does not explain much, in fact, since most of the studies contained in the volume deal with plagues in urban areas. A brief text by Shuhei Inoue, 'Medizinpolitik und Heilkundige in den Pestzeiten der

<sup>4</sup> Liliana Górka, *Theatrum atrocissimorum factorum. Religiöse Pestbewältigung in Danzig 1709* (Tönning, 2010); Piotr Kociumbas, *Słowo miastem przepojone. Kantata okolicznościowa w osiemnastowiecznym Gdańsku* (Beihefte zum Orbis Linguarum, 89, Wrocław, 2009).

<sup>5</sup> Liliana Górka, *Rola i działalność kaznodziejów w czasie epidemii dżumy w Gdańsku w roku 1709*, in Kizik (ed.), *Dżuma, ospa, cholera*, 85–98; Piotr Kociumbas, *Przywołując śpiewem czas zarazy. Reminiscencje epidemii dżumy w Rzeczypospolitej w tekstach XVIII-wiecznych gdańskich kompozycji muzycznych*, in *ibidem*, 181–92.

frühen Neuzeit: Der Stadtrat und die Barbierszunft in der Stadt Köln' (pp. 159–66), written in connection with the author's doctoral thesis, opens the section. The author has made use of manuscript archival documentation (edicts and ordinances of municipal authorities, guild materials), but the impression is that we are dealing with an initial stage of the research. There is no comparative background provided, as the medical recommendations mentioned by the author were known to the entire Latin Europe of the time: in Köln as well as in Gdańsk, Cracow, or Vienna, the same 'well-tested' means have been used.

The text authored by Alexandra-Kathrin Stanislaw-Kemenah, "... und haben aniezo offene schäden mit ziemlich großen löchern ..." – Einblicke in Dresdner Lazarettberichte aus dem Jahr 1680' (pp. 167–86), presents a very interesting material. This author has made use of the reports, preserved at the Stadtarchiv Dresden of *Pestbarbier* – a 'pest-barber', who, being employed with a municipal lazaretto, described the symptoms of pestilence: the characteristic swellings on the patients' necks and armpits. Of interest is the list of reference literature, with many items of a regional dimension or unpublished (typescripts). The hand of an experienced specialised scholar, capable of appropriately analysing the source material, is recognisable. The considerations of Patrick Sturm: "... dass die burger niemanden frembden, dern orten die pestis regiert, ohne eins erbarn raths wißen unnd bewilligen, sollen einemen" – Theorie und Praxis von Fluchtaktionen vor der Pest am Beispiel der Reichsstadt Nördlingen' (pp. 187–209), rank among the most important texts in the volume. Not only does this author analyse the municipal legislation concerning the right of residence during the threat period (taking Nördlingen as an example); using archival sources, he moreover shows attempts at looking for a shelter within the town for the time of plague. It is an interesting problem, worth studying for other urban communities as well.

Pestilence was not the only plague decimating the modern European population. Heiko Pollmeier turned his attention to another minacious disease whose symptoms marked many adult people still a few dozen years ago with the characteristic marring scars, making their faces pitted – the black smallpox. In his "Attendre", "hâter" oder "éviter la petite vérole"? Strategien zur Bewältigung der Pockennot in Frankreich (1722–1777)' (pp. 211–28), this author has summarised the discussion that went on in the Enlightenment age in France on eradication of this disease, using as his basis the period's literature and research. Regrettably, this text is not accompanied by any study reporting on analogous discussions in other European countries. Let us also, for the record, correct the information quoted in the beginning, whereby pestilence has not reappeared in Europe after 1720 (p. 211) – it is namely known that the plague was still marauding in early nineteenth century, in the continent's southern area. It would seem that the article by Marion

Baschin, 'Friesel, Ruhr und Pocken – Seuchen in einer württembergischen Oberamtsstadt' (pp. 229–46) would complement the smallpox text, in a way. However, this author has set as a goal for herself to report on the epidemiological situation (dysentery, smallpox) in nineteenth-century Württemberg, on the example of a rather small town of Esslingen. The reasons for deceases, including those collected from registers of the dead, have been broken down numerically and mutually compared in time (p. 245). The article provides an interesting and reliable outline of the issue of eradication of epidemic plagues in the early industrial period.

The three following articles show the administrative measures employed in fighting the leprosy. The placement of articles devoted to this disease testifies, once again, to how difficult it has been to appropriately group the studies collected in this volume. Due to the chronology of the plagues, these texts ought to have been placed at the volume's beginning. Marie Ulrike Schmidt presents the basic problems related to the establishment of a leprosarium belonging to Lüneburg, an important salt trade centre on the Elbe: 'Arm in Saus und Braus. Die Sozial- und Architekturgeschichte der mittelalterlichen Leproserie der Stadt Lüneburg' (pp. 247–68). This author has made use of a wealth of surviving archival sources (church accounts, from 1410 on) – determining thereupon the incomes (e.g. from salinas) – and of hospital inventories. Hers is an important and well documented article. The article by Annemarie Kinzelbach, '...“an jetzt grasierender krankheit sehr schwer darnider”. “Schau” und Kontext in süddeutschen Reichsstädten der frühen Neuzeit' (pp. 269–82), no doubt deserves attention too. Kinzelbach deals with the otherwise known institution of disclosure of official physician's diagnoses (the original *Schau*), confirming the appearance of infection symptoms – for leprosy, in this case. For the infected, this meant a verdict of civil death, the order to leave the previous abode and to move to a leprosarium. For the asylum personnel, such deed enabled to accept the patient. The article in question analyses the gradually altering character of medical opinion: from aimed at obligatory separation of the infected (until mid-16th c.) to a certificate enabling the poor to take advantage of a charity assistance of the municipality (17th-18th c.). A similar source base (plentiful collections of medical expertises and examinations) has been used by Fritz Dross in his no less important text titled 'Seuchenpolizei und ärztliche Expertise: Das Nürnberger “Sondersiechenalmsen” als Beispiel heilkundlichen Gutachtens' (pp. 283–301), indicating the problem of the alien leprosy seeking assistance, in fifteenth and sixteenth century, e.g. in Nuremberg, the town that was famous for its well-developed care for the sick. In order to limit the number of allowance seekers, benefits were only granted to those having been through professional medical examination; as a result, appropriate medical documentation has developed.

The third, and last, section of the volume comprises six articles. In his text "Ich glaube fest, sie wird mich verschonen". Seuchenbewusstsein in Briefen

von Mitgliedern der jüdischen Familie Bondi während der Choleraepidemie von 1831' (pp. 305–23), Daniel Ristau deals with the epidemic as described by members of the Jewish Bondi family in their letters. Unfortunately, only eight such letters have survived, written between the latter half of July and end December 1831; hence, what we deal with is an interesting but modest contribution to the history of the first European cholera epidemic. The article by Stefan Wiese: 'Gewalt in den Zeiten der Cholera. Begegnungen zwischen Autokratie, Intelligenz und Unterschichten im Russischen Reich während des Cholerajahres 1892' (pp. 325–46), broadly based upon the literature and fundamental Russian archival resources, is of much higher importance. Wiese focuses on the reasons, course and effects of the cholera-related riots of 1892, during the fifth great epidemic in Russia (before then, outbreaks of cholera had occurred in this country in 1823, 1829–37, 1847–61, 1865–73). The author's name is worth memorising as this minor-sized important text was probably written in connection with a larger essay or thesis (not indicated in detail, though).

Lars Bluma's text 'Die Hygienisierung des Ruhrgebiets: Das Gelsenkirchener Hygiene-Institut im Kaiserreich' (pp. 347–67) shows the relations between the emergence of modern municipal technological infrastructure (water-supply/sewerage systems) and special hygiene institutes, on the one hand, and the enhancing quality of daily life of workers in industrial centres of the Ruhr in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, on the other. Martin Buchsteiner's article ('Zur Entwicklung der Medizinalverwaltung in Mecklenburg-Schwerin bis 1926', pp. 369–90) comprises a rather general and, naturally, superfluous outline of the history of medical services operating in the Mecklenburg-Schwerin Duchy territory between the late seventeenth century and the administrative reforms period following World War I. The author omits organisation of medical assistance in the time of epidemics (of pestilence, smallpox and cholera) and the article's character diverges, in general, from the subject-matter of the volume as a whole. Much more information on the efforts to subdue an epidemic in a relatively low-urbanised land, Mecklenburg, is given by the analytical article by Antje Strahl ('Epidemie im ländlichen Raum – Die Spanische Grippe des Jahres 1918 in Mecklenburg', pp. 391–408). Basing on relevant archival sources, the author presents the fight with the Spanish influenza in 1918–19 and the outcome of this pandemic, whose extreme aggressiveness (deaths triggered by pneumonia) and unprecedented reach have till our day remained a scientifically under-explored issue. The following article, by Wilfried Witte ('Eine Bombe gegen Grippe. Grippe im Jahre 1976 – ein deutsch-deutscher Vergleich', pp. 409–28), also refers to the influenza problem by presenting a comparative analysis of facing and tackling its epidemical symptoms in West and East Germany in 1976. Witte's focus is on the ideological discourse, the role of the United States and the Soviet Union, which exerted their impacts on epidemiologists'

opinions in both German states, showing e.g. a controversy over efficacy of prophylactic inoculations, which has continued till present.

The volume is concluded by an article, or essay, on the present-day attitude toward AIDS incidences, written by Henning Tümmers: “Synthesekern” Aids: Forschungsperspektiven und Plädoyer für eine Zusammenführung von Zeit- und Medizingeschichte’ (pp. 429–45). Referring to the journalism of the recent decades, this author offers a recapitulation of the history of the illness and of studies on its causes and social effects.

It is not easy for me to phrase an unambiguous evaluation of the *Seuche und Mensch* volume. Beside doubtlessly important studies, well-documented and revealing new research aspects, mean-quality or, merely, poor-quality texts appear within it – a rather frequent case with conference-based publications, in fact. Yet, in general, the interested reader has received a fairly genuine review of the most recent reference literature, along with a herald of some larger research ventures whose outcomes will be worth getting acquainted with in a future.

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