

Die Chronik der Polen des Magisters Vincentius, translated, introduced and critically edited by Eduard Mühle, foreword by the series editor Hans-Werner Goetz, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2014, 424 pp., Ausgewählte Quellen zur Geschichte des Mittelalters Freiherr-vom-Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe, vol. 48

Any translation of *Chronica Polonorum* (The Chronicle of the Poles) by Master Vincentius into a national language is a great challenge and arouses a great deal of interest. On this occasion, we have received a translation into German, which introduces the masterpiece into the German medieval studies and the German culture with which Poles are familiar. This analysis looks at Eduard Mühle's work on three planes – the editor's introduction, the Latin text and its translation, and the critical commentary on the interpretation and narration by Master Vincentius.

The introduction to *The Chronicle of the Poles*, as well as the presentation of the figure of Bishop Vincentius of Cracow, the author and participant in the history, follow a well-worn track in the Polish historiography. The editor examines the chronicler's date of birth, his name, nickname and social background, and investigates where he had studied to earn the title 'Master'. Mühle supports his arguments by referencing a vast literature in which the reader (especially a German one) can easily get lost in an attempt to identify the items which illuminate the issues under discussion. Proven solutions are adopted, a clear-headed look is taken at the intricate theories of Kadłubek's ancestral and familial connections or his studies abroad. The editor admits that Kadłubek came from a wealthy family whose ancestral origin is difficult to establish, and indicates possible connections with the Włostowic family (a fact investigated by many researchers) (p. 18). More strongly than other historians, although refraining from presenting a definitive view, the editor is inclined to believe that the chronicler received his education locally, and supports his view with references to the literature on the subject, where Italian canons of Cracow Cathedral are indicated as Kadłubek's possible masters.

Mühle then moves on to discuss Kadłubek's clerical and political career, beginning with the statement that was unavoidable for the German medievalist: we know almost nothing about Master Vincentius's activity as Bishop of Cracow. Nonetheless, a detailed and meticulous report is given of what is known: from Bishop Kadłubek's participation in provincial Church councils and the Lateran Council in 1215, through his predilection and generosity for the Cistercian monks, to his resignation from the office and settling down in Jędrzejów. Thus,

the editor remains within the current of the interpretations of the Polish medievalist Brygida Kürbis. Within the constraints of conciseness imposed by the publishing series, the editor gives a brief overview of the chronicler's biography, without tackling problems which would have required exceptional erudition or additional research.

Two of the threads discussed in the introduction draw the reader's particular attention. It is soon obvious that the editor has little confidence in working with narrative sources, so he is open to testing the narrative in order to try to establish what is and what is not a historical fact. Such a procedure has been applied to an elaborative construction (in terms of the rhetoric and composition), in which Master Vincentius puts the mitred prelates John and Matthew in the position of reporters of Polish history, and himself as their listener.

Mühle can neither liberate himself from the trap of rhetorical mode, nor can he accept that young Vincentius did not in fact listen to the bishops' conversations (pp. 15, 19). The question is all the more surprising given that the study by Zenon Kałuża¹ shows that the rhetoric is inspired by Plato's *Timaeus*, and renders the digression groundless. Even if pursued for any reason, such a digression should be accompanied by at least a brief presentation of the similarities, in terms of the composition and the text itself, between the Latin translation of Plato's work, by Calcidius, and the corresponding parts of the lecture by Bishop Vincentius.

A superficial study of the literature of the subject has led the editor to fail to notice Kadłubek's inspiration in the Platonic symposium and, after Teresa Michałowska, look for a prototype of the intellectual feast with John of Salisbury.² When Michałowska was writing her monumental work, the connections between Kadłubek's *Chronicle* and the work by Plato were still undiscovered (pp. 49, 296, n. 421).

The other thread worth noting, discussed in the introduction, is the explanation of the period of Poland's fragmentation to the German reader. We do not object to Mühle's statement that Boleslaus III the Wry-Mouthed 'referred to the archaic rule of priority in power based on age' (p. 34). However, the presentation of the (evolving) political mechanism established in Poland in the first quarter of the twelfth century is schematic and misses many significant elements. For example, no attention is paid to Cracow with its aspirations to become the capital city, the transformation (noted by Janusz Bieniak) of the pieces of land conferred on dynastic families into hereditary estates, or — focusing on the most important matters — the emergence, from the territories which were divided among the families belonging to the dynasty, of a core ter-

¹ Zenon Kałuża, 'Kadłubka historia mówiona i historia pisana (*Kronika* I 1–2, I 9 i II 1–2)', *Przegląd Tomistyczny*, 12, 2006, pp. 61–120 (pp. 70 f.).

² Teresa Michałowska, *Średniowiecze, Wielka historia literatury polskiej*, Warsaw, 1996, pp. 134 ff.

ritory which could not be obtained *iure hereditario* — something important to the line of Casimir II the Just.³

Sadly, the parts of the introduction to the *Chronicle* which discuss its contents and structure do not deserve any positive comment. Although the reviewer may focus too strongly on his own areas of research, it must be admitted that the non-historical — so to speak — parts of Vincentius's work have been summarized mechanically, with their heavily freighted ideological content reduced in importance — a practice originating from the nineteenth-century issues of *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*. Clearly, the editor intended a concise overview. Nevertheless, rather than simply enumerate the narrative pieces developed by Vincentius, he could have provided the reader with a brief guide to their concept and meaning. Numerous references to the literature of the subject in the footnotes do not help, but rather pose the question of why, with so many resources at his disposal, the editor is so laconic when dealing with the main task.

Doubtlessly, Mühle will find many supporters of the view that to indicate the borrowing of a text means to catch out the author on work which lacks originality and produces derivative results, of limited interest and non-historical in character. It must be added ironically here, even with reference to medieval intellectuals, although it is common knowledge that writers of the middle ages were free to use texts of other authors and adapt them for their own purposes. The editor, guided by the aforementioned belief, meticulously enumerates the borrowings which Master Vincentius included in his work, mercilessly marking in italics anything that may originate from other authors, both in the commentary and in the main text.

An extreme example of the above practice is a passage borrowed by Kadłubek from Seneca. Here, the word 'hanc' is marked in italics, except for the letter 'a', which Vincentius used instead of the 'u' in the original (p. 184, hanc — hunc). Taking into consideration the way in which education could be gained in the middle ages, and the predilection of medieval intellectuals for respecting authorities, an uncompromising use of quotation marks in medieval texts prevents the researcher from reaching a thorough understanding of not only the conveyed message, but also the creative work that the author did in adapting the borrowed material to his own needs and expectations. Thus, the editor shifts the reader's attention from following the effects of the new expression of the ideas by the medieval 'imitator' towards classifying these statements according to the correctness of the quotation.

Moving on to the Latin text of the *Chronicle* and its translation into German, Mühle based his translation on the Latin text prepared by Marian Plezia for

³ See Jacek Banaszekiewicz, *Polskie dzieje bajeczne Mistrza Wincentego Kadłubka*, Warsaw, 1998, pp. 315–48; Janusz Bieniak, 'Polska elita polityczna XII wieku. Tło działalności', in *Spółczesność Polski średniowiecznej*, Warsaw, 1981–, vol. 2, ed. Stefan K. Kuczyński, 1982, pp. 30 ff.

Monumenta Poloniae Historica. The Latin text and the translation are presented side by side. As noted in the introduction, certain corrections have been introduced to the Latin text, supposedly to improve the original version. One of them has been made in Book II, Chapter 16 of the *Chronicle*, with reference to the couplet ‘Non locus hic loculis — in arce’ in the story of Boleslaus the Bold and a greedy cleric. Mühle claims (p. 166, n. 142)⁴ that for an unknown reason Plezia, having included the couplet in his edition, square-bracketed it as missing from the original text, in spite of the fact that the couplet is there in the *Eugenius Codex of the Chronicle of Vincentius*.⁵

Mühle evidently did not come across the article in which Plezia explains the reason for putting the couplet in square brackets.⁶ There are two instances of the couplet, in two pieces in verse, close to each other in the original text. The first instance appears only in the *Eugenius Codex of the Chronicle*. The second instance is in the *Eugenius Codex*, but also in other manuscripts of the *Chronicle*. Respecting the *Eugenius Codex* and supporting his decision with an analysis of both pieces in verse and the text of *Vita Stanislai*, in which the first instance of the couplet (that is, the version presented in the *Eugenius Codex*) is confirmed, Plezia considered the couplet part of the first piece in verse, and square-bracketed its second instance as arguably non-existent in the original text.

This seemingly intricate story reveals the secrets of the editorial work. Surprised that Plezia bracketed the couplet in the second piece in verse, the editor was not alarmed by the fact that an identical couplet appears in the first piece in verse in the Latin text, which he himself included in his edition of the *Chronicle*. This is not the only surprise though. In spite of the fact that there are two instances of the couplet in the original text (pp. 164, 166) its translation is provided only for the second instance. The translator must have based his work on the translation into Polish by Brygida Kürbis, which does not include the first instance of the couplet in question.⁷ Neither does the version edited by August Bielowski for MPH; however, Bielowski has commented on the difference between his version and the *Eugenius Codex*.⁸

Another correction to Plezia’s edition of the *Chronicle* has been introduced to the moralizing piece included in Book IV, Chapter 4, 25 (p. 320, n. 461). Refer-

⁴ The couplet opens the first piece in verse and appears inside the second one.

⁵ The *Eugenius Codex* contains the oldest known manuscript of the *Chronicle* and is held in Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, file record 480 (Eugen. file 12), see: Jacek Wiesiołowski, *Kolekcje historyczne w Polsce średniowiecznej XIV-XV wieku*, Wrocław, 1967, pp. 59 ff.

⁶ Marian Plezia, ‘Wiersze w Kronice Kadłubka’, in idem, *Scripta minora. Łacina średniowieczna i Wincenty Kadłubek*, Cracow, 2001, pp. 321–32.

⁷ Cf. Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek), *Kronika polska*, transl. and ed. Brygida Kürbis, Wrocław, 1992, p. 70. The edition by Plezia was published two years later.

⁸ *Mistrza Wincentego Kronika polska i jej skrócenie przez bezimiennego dopełniacza Kroniki Mierzwy zrobione*, ed. August Bielowski, in MPH, vol. 2, reprint, Warsaw, 1961, p. 290.

ring to Bielowski, Mühle identifies here a quotation from St Jerome (Latin: Hieronymus), and claims, after Bielowski, that the word 'huius', which opens the sentence in question and appears in manuscripts, due to copyists' fault wrongly stands for 'Hm', an abbreviation used in the past for the name Hieronymus. And so, the entire phrase goes as follows: 'Unde Hieronymus [here — the quotation from Jerome — J.B.] prudentia nihil simplicius, simplicitate nihil prudentius' (Book IV, 4, 25, verse 2 f., p. 320).

According to the editor, this supposedly appropriate emendation is based on the fact that the name Hieronymus could be found in the original text of the *Chronicle*, which is confirmed by a quotation from this Church Father's *Commentary* on Hosea's prophecy, appearing nearby in the text. Mühle's stance in this matter must have been influenced by Kürbis, who had accepted the interpretation proposed by Bielowski before Plezia's edition became available. However, the editor does not reveal the grounds for his opinion.

To sum up, Plezia sees no reason for the word 'huius' to stand for the name 'Hieronymus', or for the sentence 'prudentia nihil simplicius [...]' to be considered a quotation from the *Commentary* by St Jerome on Hosea's prophecy. Rightly so, as this is not a quotation from St Jerome, and the piece, mentioned by Bielowski, goes as follows: 'simplicitate et prudentia exhibeamus hominem temperatum, quia prudentia absque simplicitate malitia est [...]'.⁹

Finally, one more example — the improvement of a sentence in Book IV, Chapter 14, 14 of Plezia's edition. Mühle objects to both Bielowski's and Plezia's versions of the sentence, supported by an expert (revealed this time as — Kürbis). The sentence in question, in my translation of the text prepared by Plezia, is as follows: '[so it happened] according to the prophecy of their seer, who — asked by the warriors about the result of the battle on its eve — divined from animals' entrails, that the clash would bring a pitiful doom'.¹⁰

Obviously, Kürbis could not have made use of the edition of the *Chronicle* in the new series of MPH. Therefore, she took a stance on the text prepared by Bielowski, and rightly noticed an error in the sentence under analysis. In Bielowski's edition, we can read: 'ab eis consultus lugubrem fore portendi exitium in extis phisiculantibus fuerat auguratus'¹¹ — so the seer, as Kürbis commented, could have, in grammatical terms, divined 'lugubre exitium' (pitiful, pathetic doom), or 'lugubrem exitum' (pitiful end). Professor Kürbis had another

⁹ *Hieronymi Commentarium in Osee Prophetam Libri tres*, II, 76, PL, vol. 25, p. 878. Cf. Jan z Dąbrówki, *Komentarz do Kroniki polskiej mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem*, ed. Marian Zwiercan, Anna Zofia Kozłowska and Michał Rzepiela, Cracow, 2008, p. 221, MPH s.n., vol. 14.

¹⁰ '[i stało się tak] wedle przepowiedni ich wieszczca, który — zapytany w przeddzień bitwy przez wojowników o jej wynik — przepowiedział z trzewi zwierząt, że starcie przyniesie opłakaną zagładę' [transl. — J.B.] according to *Magistri Vincentii dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum*, ed. Marian Plezia, Cracow, 1994, IV, 14, 14 f., p. 158, MPH s.n., vol. 11.

¹¹ *Mistrza Wincentego Kronika polska*, p. 412.

idea: she replaced the word ‘portendi’ (present infinitive, passive voice) with ‘portenti’, and joined it with the phrase ‘lugubrem exitum’ to obtain ‘lugubrem fore portenti exitum’ which, translated into Polish, gave a phrase meaning ‘pathetic will be the end of this odd event’.¹²

It is not an appropriate measure, as the text, according to Plezia, goes rightly as follows: ‘lugubre fore portendi exitium’. However, all these manipulations have distracted the editor to such an extent that in the footnote correcting Plezia’s edition he states that neither Plezia nor Bielowski is right, and supports the version proposed by Kürbis, who claims that ‘dass es richtig entweder “lugubre exitium” oder “lugubrem exitum” heißen muss’ (p. 348, n. 496). If so, why does Mühle not approve of the reading by Plezia, why does he choose the latter, rather artificial version proposed by Kürbis, and finally — why, including the incriminated passage in the form ‘lugubre fore portenti exitum’, does he remain silent about the replacement of ‘portendi’ with ‘portenti’, that is, a verb with a noun, which changes the meaning of the statement?¹³ Based on the above and other examples of corrections, not discussed here, I judge that they do not result from a thorough study of the original Latin text.

The translation and commentary work by Mühle also raise many doubts. Let us begin with a thought-provoking example. At the beginning of Book IV, Master Vincentius includes several theatrical scenes with dialogues. One of them provoked Kürbis to make the following remark: ‘Vincentius cannot quit the previously used form of dialogue here’.¹⁴ The editor fails to reveal that it was Kürbis’s remark that sensitized him to this problem; however, maybe on his own initiative, although with reference to the same narrative piece which provoked Kürbis to make that remark, Mühle expresses an

¹² ‘nieszczęsny będzie koniec tego osobliwego zdarzenia’; Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek), *Kronika polska*, p. 219 and n. 173. By the way, the phrase ‘in extis fisculantibus fuerat auguratus’ used by Vincentius and the situation designed by him, possibly on the basis of Rusyns’ prophecies, lead to the work by Martianus Capella and other authors who commented on the piece in question, see: Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*, ed. James A. Willis, Leipzig, 1983, II, 151, p. 46: ‘hæc haruspicio exta fisculant admonentia quædam vocesque transmittunt augurisque loquuntur ominibus’. See also: *Novum Glossarium Mediæ Latinitatis. Phacoides-Pingo*, ed. François Dolbeau et al., Brussels, 2003, p. 110 (s.v. physiculo); *The Berlin Commentary on Martianus Capella’s De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii Book II*, ed. Haijo Jan Westra and Tanja Kupke with the assistance of Benjamin Garstad, Leiden, 1997, p. 96.

¹³ The fact that replacing ‘portendi’ with ‘portenti’ is a failed idea is proven in the next sentence, where it is said, with reference to the prophecy of defeat (‘fore portendi exitium’): those seeking advice of the seer thought that the prophecy brought — announced doom to the enemies, not to themselves — ‘quod illi hostibus portendi non sibi arbitrantur’. Cf. *Magistri Vincentii dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum*, IV, 14, 15 f., p. 158.

¹⁴ ‘Wincenty nie umie się tu oderwać od stosowanej uprzednio formy dialogu’, Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek), *Kronika polska*, p. 179, n. 27.

identical observation, and definitely unassisted indicates a sentence in which the number and conjugation of verbs do not match due to the persistent use of dialogue.

In the sentence ‘Cognitis ergo consiliis, consequens est ut cognoscas eorundem iudicia’ (‘Having learnt their advice, learn the judgements passed by those people’), which is perfectly correct, the editor notices ‘die Unstimmigkeit in der Personenzahl’, and translates the entire sentence as follows: ‘Since you (ihr) have learnt such advice, it is a natural order for you (du) to learn [also] the judgements passed by those people’ (Book IV, 2, 11, p. 302, n. 432, 303).¹⁵ A form which is part of an *ablativus absolutus* (a passive perfect infinitive declined in the plural instrumental case — ‘cognitis’) is interpreted by Mühle as a verb form in the second person plural, hence Vincentius’s ‘Unstimmigkeit’: ‘you’ in the plural at the beginning of the sentence, and in the singular further on.

Among many pieces translated in a surprising way, which remain in conflict with the Latin text, only a few are discussed here — those, which illustrate how superficial the editor’s approach is to the reading of Master Vincentius. In the prologue, the chronicler presents a lofty vision of his mission — ‘We are not supposed to frisk in a circle amongst muses but to face the rostrum of the splendid senate’;¹⁶ or ‘the dais of the highly esteemed senate’ — an apt and accurate rephrasing proposed by Kürbis.¹⁷ Mühle looks for a higher meaning — according to him, we are to subordinate to the advice of the holy senate (p. 89),¹⁸ in spite of the fact that the word ‘suggestus’ explicitly suggests a material podium, hence the use of ‘stolica’ (frumstol) in the translation by Andrzej Józefczyk and Marcel Studziński.

However, let us consider it a detail of little importance. We are still at the beginning of the *Chronicle*. Matthew and John are talking about the earliest history of the Lechites and revive the forgotten or obscure history of the birth of a national community — a method originating from *Timaeus*. Similarly to Critias the Younger, (who during the feast meeting reveals the story) he had heard in his childhood from his grandfather, his grandfather’s friend Solon, and Solon’s

¹⁵ ‘Nachdem ihr also solche Ratschläge kennen gelernt habt, ist es folgerichtig, dass du [auch] deren Gerichtsurteile kennen lernst’.

¹⁶ ‘nie w kole wśród Muz swawolić, lecz przy stolicy świętnego senatu stanąć mamy’, *Mistrza Wincentego zwanego Kadłubkiem biskupa krakowskiego, Kronika polska*, ed. Aleksander Przędziecki, transl. Andrzej Józefczyk and Marcelli Studziński, Cracow, 1862, p. 36.

¹⁷ ‘pod trybuną czcigodnego senatu’, *Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek), Kronika polska*, p. 4.

¹⁸ We are not supposed to frisk with maidens amongst muses, ‘sondern der Beratung des heiligen Senats beistehen’. This is how the sentence is translated by Darius von Güttner-Sporzyński, ‘Constructing Memory: Holy War in the Chronicle of Poles by Bishop Vincentius of Cracow’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 40, 2014, p. 206, n. 16: ‘We are not supposed to frisk with maidens amongst muses but to face the judgement of the venerable senate’. See also the reviewed work, p. 78.

informers, Egyptian priests, about the original history of Athens, here Bishop Matthew goes back in memory to revive the forgotten history of the Lechites. Opening his retrospective with the statement ‘Narrabat itaque grandis natu’, thanks to a testimony of an old man, nameless in the *Chronicle*, Matthew can travel in time to the dawn of the national history.¹⁹

The editor’s translation of the passage goes as follows: ‘und so erzählte der besagte alte Mann’, that is, ‘this is the story told by the mentioned old man’ (Book I, 2, 1, p. 93). The rub is that this valuable informer had not been, and could not have been, mentioned earlier. It makes little sense to investigate whether the old man is confused with Bishop Matthew, who announced that he would refer to ‘perveredicam maiorum narrationem’, or whether he is considered one of the *maiores* with good memory. Anyway, the phrase ‘besagter alter Mann’ proves that the translator gets lost in the text, although he cites the works which illustrate explicitly how Vincentius’s idea of reviving the history of the Lechites is built on the scheme used in *Timaeus*. The old man is simply a subsequent representative (after Matthew) of the generational relay leading to the earliest history of the community.

The translation provides more examples of misinterpretation of the Latin text. Let us now examine one of Kadłubek’s f tales — a story about Lestek, who obtained the crown in a race. The story is intricate. There is a crook, and there is someone who, having discovered the stratagem, attempts to outwit everybody. The crook scatters sharp spikes all over the racing track, and leaves a single path, known only to him, free from the spikes. The other character, aware of the danger, shoes his horse with iron pads, but also removes the safe track by moving the scattered spikes onto it. In the race, he easily comes first. However, the title of king does not go to the winner. The piqued, or hurt public (‘universitas’), seeing the iron pads on the horse’s hoofs, to cite Master Vincentius, ‘eum dixit esse doli auctorem’ — takes the winner for the author of the trick, and treats him cruelly: tearing him into pieces.

Mühle presents the situation quite differently. In the German version, when the public saw the iron pads on the hoofs of the winner’s horse, the winner admitted that he was the author of the trick (Book I, 13, 7, p. 115). We finish the analysis of the translation work with this example; however, it does not close the list of misinterpreted pieces of the *Chronicle*.

Finally, let us analyse the scholarly apparatus. In the form of footnotes, it supports the reader in their peregrination across Vincentius’s *Chronicle*.

Undoubtedly, it would have been better and even more appropriate for Mühle openly to have had recourse to the existing critical and scholarly apparatus to Vincentius’s *Chronicle*. Although the editor comments that he has brought the accrued amount of knowledge down to the information which seems essential for proper understanding of the text, the facts are different. The supposedly brief and pragmatic commentary is generally based on the

¹⁹ See Kałuża, *Kadłubka historia*, pp. 70 ff.

footnotes by Kürbis to the Polish edition of the *Chronicle*. Certainly, Kürbis's footnotes have been made more concise; however, there is no reason to treat them as general encyclopaedic knowledge, all the more so since they often constitute self-contained, analytical studies.

To illustrate another aspect of the practice mentioned above — in footnote 457, the editor states, with reference to Duke Casimir playing dice with courtier John, that Vincentius's opinion on this type of entertainment is different from that of John of Salisbury. I would have believed, albeit reluctantly, that this remark is necessary for proper understanding of the text, if it had not been for the fact that Kürbis commented on the piece as follows: 'As if in a discussion with John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* I, 4 about hunting, and I, 5 about playing dice, the author [Master Vincentius — J.B.] presents these types of entertainment as activities worthy of a ruler'.²⁰

Another comment of this kind is provided in footnote 528. It is a summary of Heinrich Zeissberg's remark on the saying 'To reach the honey, you must first kill the bees', used — according to Master Vincentius — by Roman, duke of Halych. Zeissberg noted that the saying must have been in use at the courts of the dukes of Halych-Volhynia, since it had been found in the Galician-Volynian *Chronicle*, with reference to a statement by Centurion Mikola addressed to Daniel, Roman's son.²¹

A more explicit example of commenting in such a way is given in footnote 113. Here, the editor found it necessary to explain several terms used by Kadłubek, although his intervention would have been more helpful in many other cases. The terms 'pars sollicitudinis' and 'plenitudo potestatis' are explained. With regard to the former, Mühle states that the chronicler meant the duties of a bishop 'in canonical terms'. He states that they both appear in a letter by Bernard of Clairvaux to Pope Eugenius III (p. 146).²² This display of exceptional erudition appears in a footnote of the edition; it was derived from the research of Danuta Borawska, a distinguished Polish medievalist; nevertheless, the reviewer needed to find this out by himself.²³ We will not be taking sides

²⁰ 'Jakby w dyskusji z Janem z Salisbury, *Policraticus* I, 4 o polowaniu i I, 5 o grze w kości, autor [Master Vincentius — J.B.] przedstawia te rozrywki jako zajęcia godne panującego', Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek), *Kronika polska*, p. 189, n. 71.

²¹ See: Heinrich Ritter von Zeissberg, *Vincentius Kadłubek Bischof von Krakau (1208-1218, † 1223) und seine Chronik Polens*, Vienna, 1869, p. 186.

²² 'Zu den Begriffen *pars sollicitudinis* (im kanonischen Sinn=die Pflichten eines Bischofs) und *plenitudo potestatis* vgl. Bernhard von Clairvaux an Papst Eugen III. (Migne, PL 185, Sp. 273)'.

²³ Danuta Borawska, 'Mistrz Wincenty w nowym wydaniu i opracowaniu. W stronę cystersów i św. Bernarda z Clairvaux', *PH*, 68, 1977, 2, p. 347: 'In canon law, the term *pars sollicitudinis* referred to the duties of a bishop. It is worth noting here that both terms, *pars sollicitudinis* and *plenitudo potestatis*, in a similar relation to each other [as in Kadłubek's *Chronicle* — J.B.], can be found in a letter by St Bernard to Pope Eugenius III' ('W prawie kanonicznym termin *pars sollicitudinis* określał powinności biskupa. Jest rzeczą wartą zanotowania, że oba terminy *pars sollicitudinis* i *plenitudo potestatis*

if, towards the end of this review, we take a closer look at the commentary written by the editor. Eduard Mühle presents himself as a researcher sensitive to the ideological content conveyed in the narration of Master Vincentius, and with reference to the chronicler's lecture on the capture of Duke Volodar by Peter Wlast (Piotr Włostowic), notes that Kürbis's translation of a passage of this story misses certain implied meanings (p. 262, n. 367). In particular, he refers to Vincentius's statement, or rather remark and conclusion, saying that the brave Peter 'sue salutis dispendio patrie salutem mercatur' — a phrase translated by Kürbis as follows: 'putting his own life at risk, he gains the safety of his homeland'.²⁴ Mühle alleges that Kürbis failed to convey the chronicler's moral objection to Peter's act, voiced in the phrase under analysis, and translates the phrase as follows: 'condemnation of his own soul was the price he paid for saving his home country' (p. 262).²⁵

Thus, for the price of condemnation of his own soul, Peter buys salvation for his homeland. This is a very unusual balance of accounts for the middle ages, even more so considering that it is done by a cleric, and with reference to the authority of two great bishops. However, rather than following this line of thought, let us examine the statements by Vincentius and his narrators, to prove just how groundless is Mühle's allegation. The incriminated sentence, with an elaborative construction typical for Master Vincentius, implies a certain game: Peter, running a very risky venture, at expense of his health, his prosperity, his person ('sue salutis dispendio') buys the peace — salvation for his homeland ('patrie salutem mercatur').

Even for this reason, the editor's interpretation seems to have failed. If only the editor had wanted to note that John, commenting on Peter's adventures, names him 'vir prudens', whilst in the opinion of the archbishop, the entire venture is virtuous (the word 'virtus' is used), he would have understood that any prejudice to the soul, which the courageous captor allegedly suffered, is out of question. An explicit comment by Master Vincentius in support of Peter states that his ambush was a heroic deed. What is more, it was both just and heroic, in spite of being crafty.²⁶ Self-interest is of the greatest value for Master Vincentius, as well as for other medieval writers. Our task, on the other hand, is to interpret the messages conveyed in compliance with the authors' intention.

This review does not aim to be an exhaustive discussion of Eduard Mühle's edition of the *Chronicle* by Vincentius. Many controversial pieces of the text, as well as many solutions applied by the editor, will provoke further discussion.

w podobnym związku [jak występują w *Kronice* Kadłubka — J.B.] spotykamy w piśmie św. Bernarda do papieża cystersa Eugeniusza III'); in the footnote, Borawska indicates the source reference *Patrologia latina* by Migne, above.

²⁴ 'z narażeniem własnego życia zdobywa bezpieczeństwo ojczyzny', Mistrz Wincenty (tzw. Kadłubek), *Kronika polska*, p. 146.

²⁵ 'erkauft er die Rettung des Vaterlandes mit dem Verlust seines [eigenes] Seelenheils'.

²⁶ *Magistri Vincentii dicti Kadłubek Chronica Polonorum*, III, 21, 1–3, pp. 109 f.

However, this partial analysis gives an idea about the entirety of the work. For the reasons stated above, we refrain from generalizing or judging, in hope that the review will help readers form their own opinions on the material which introduces Master Vincentius and his *Chronicle* into German medieval studies.

Jacek Banaszekiewicz
(Warsaw)

(Translated by Paulina Dzwonnik)

Paul Srodecki, *Antemurale Christianitatis. Zur Genese der Bollwerksrhetorik im östlichen Mitteleuropa an der Schwelle vom Mittelalter zur Frühen Neuzeit*, Husum: Matthiesen, 2015, 532 pp., *Historische Studien*, vol. 508

The extremely important question of the use of the ‘bulwark of Christianity’ topos in the rhetoric of the late Middle Ages and the early modern period in Central Europe has now been examined in detail in Paul Srodecki’s study. His analysis of the use of the *antemurale* idea for propaganda purposes is a starting point for the author to discuss the boundaries of Europe at the time, the identity of members in this community, and the traits attributed to entities excluded from it. Srodecki’s reflections are based on a wealth of varied source texts such as speeches, chronicles, international agreements, reports, panegyrics, and letters dealing with Central Europe (see the bibliography of source texts on pp. 389–406).

Srodecki’s research focuses on the period from the thirteenth until the end of the sixteenth century, although in the introduction and conclusion the scholar includes also earlier (from the eleventh century) and later (until the early twentieth century) periods in his analysis. His ambitious chronological span is matched by a broad geographical horizon. With the exception of the introductory chapters (1 and 2) in which he recalls the ancient and early medieval understanding of the boundaries of the civilized world, he focuses on various aspects of the *antemurale* rhetoric in lands ruled by the Teutonic Order, the Houses of Piast and Arpad in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries (Chapter 3), and then by the Jagiellonians, the Luxembourgs, and King Matthias Corvinus (Chapters 4, 6 and 7). Less extensive is Srodecki’s analysis on the use of the ‘bulwark ideology’ in Moldavia, Wallachia, Republic of Venice, and Croatia. Chapter 5 deals with the role of humanistic literature, particularly the writings of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, in the spread of the vision of Central European monarchies as the ‘bulwarks of Christianity’ after the fall of Constantinople (1453). Chapter 8 is devoted to a brief presentation of changes in the ‘bulwark’ rhetoric in the seventeenth century caused by religious conflicts within the Western Church and the proliferation of printing. In Chapter 9 the narrative moves to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, even including some remarks concerning the Third Reich. Focussing on the evolution of the bulwark idea, Srodecki stresses its key role in

the construction of Polish, Hungarian and Croatian national identities. He also points out that in the case of some thinkers, for example in the Duchy of Warsaw period, religious references disappear from the *antemurale* rhetoric, replaced by ideas associated with the defence of new values, that is secular Europe (p. 340). The fact that his analysis reaches the twentieth century enables Srodecki to emphasise the continuing relevance of the subject matter in his conclusion (pp. 361–68), especially in the face of questions about the boundaries of the European Union and its relations with its neighbours. By providing a complete picture of the evolution in the use of the ‘bulwark’ ideology, the author points to some recurring traits attributed to members of one’s own group and to outsiders, as well as similarities in the description of members of both groups across centuries. There is an extremely interesting comparison made between the *antemurale* rhetoric used by the Teutonic Order in its disputes with Poland and Lithuania in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (pp. 111–32) and similar arguments supporting anti-Ottoman actions of the Jagiellonians and Matthias Corvinus. The author undoubtedly demonstrates to his readers that the ideology of the ‘bulwark’ was adapted to the needs of various rulers in order to justify armed conflicts with their enemies, whether among Christians of different denominations, against Muslims or pagans, or to strengthen the position of a given ruler among the Catholics.

Particularly noteworthy are fragments of the monograph in which the author assesses the effectiveness of actions which employed the *antemurale* topos for propaganda purposes, undertaken by Central European states and rulers on the international stage. In this context, descriptions of how the image of the ‘stranger’ was created are especially interesting with regard to Christian enemies by Sigismund of Luxembourg, in the case of the Hussites by Matthias Corvinus (pp. 186–89), and of the Grand Duchy of Moscow in the sixteenth century by Poland-Lithuania. Srodecki’s readers will find an interesting summary of Polish-Lithuanian propaganda campaigns aimed at presenting Moscow as, alongside the Ottoman Empire, the main enemy in the East. The author seems to be suggesting that the effectiveness of actions carried out with the Hansa and the Order of the Sword Brothers (later with the Duchy of Courland and Semigallia), was in direct proportion to the power of Poland and Lithuania. Srodecki gives examples of a number of successful propaganda campaigns in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (pp. 292–303), but notes the complete fiasco of this policy in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (p. 305).

It is worth asking whether a successful campaign involving the creation of the image of a ruler as an *athleta Christi* or *defensor fidei* brought tangible political, military, or financial benefits; for example in the form of funds obtained for operations against an enemy regarded as an *inimicus Dei*. Unfortunately, the monograph provides only a partial answer to the question. Most information is provided about the political benefits. Srodecki discusses in exceptional detail the significance of the ‘defender of the faith’ image in the political careers

of the regent John Hunyadi and King Matthias Corvinus (pp. 189–96). The author also devotes attention to the papal policy of supporting the fight against the Turkish threat. Yet the readers learn about the Holy See's reaction to specific political events, rather than receiving a summary or assessment of the effectiveness of these actions in the late Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern period.

Another important problem tackled by Srodecki is the question of political pragmatism by monarchs who liked to be regarded, at home and abroad, as defenders of Christian Europe against Muslim rulers. In general, the author seems to agree with earlier scholars who, like Christine Isom-Verhaaren, stressed that Catholic kings and princes, in their concern for the welfare of their lands, concluded separatist truces and peace treaties or even entered into alliances with their counterparts in the world of Islam.¹ It should be noted that authors of propaganda works serving a ruler who, on the one hand, wanted to be seen as a defender of Christianity and, on the other, sought to maintain peaceful relations with the world of Islam, faced a delicate task. A good example of an author who in his works had to praise both the idea of *antemurale* and peaceful co-existence with the Ottoman Empire was Filippo Buonaccorsi (called Callimachus). When analysing his *Historia de rege Vladislao*, Srodecki is right to stress that the work portrays Władysław III as a defender of the faith who dies a chivalric death killed by the infidels (pp. 225–28). Reading the German scholar's reflections, we have the impression that he missed those fragments of the work in which Callimachus clearly criticized the breaking of the so-called Peace of Szeged (1444).² The Italian humanist may have wanted not only to build the legend of Władysław III, but also to praise the pragmatic policy pursued by the reigning monarch King Casimir IV towards the Ottomans.

What distinguishes Srodecki's monograph is its interesting and logical narrative, the understanding of which is aided by a map of Europe and engravings from the analysed period placed at the end of the monograph. A considerable asset of the book is the weaving of many well-chosen source quotations into the narrative, although the decision to give them only in their original version, that is, usually in Latin, can be regarded as bold. The result is that the author limits the circle of his readers — at least those who will fully understand his work — to those who know the language.

In conclusion, it is worth stressing that Srodecki's book is the first such detailed analysis of the *antemurale* rhetoric in Central Europe of the late Middle Ages and at the beginning of the modern period. It will undoubtedly become essential reading for scholars of the period specializing in relations between Western Christian Europe, Orthodox Christianity, and Islam. Paul Srodecki's monograph is also

¹ Christine Isom-Verhaaren, *Allies with the Infidel. The Ottoman and French Alliance in the Sixteenth Century*, New York, 2013.

² *Filippi Callimachi historia de rege Vladislao*, ed. Irmina Lichońska, commentary by Tadeusz Kowalewski, transl. Anna Komornicka, Warsaw, 1961, pp. 173–90.

an important contribution to the study, so relevant today, of the construction of images of an 'us' and 'them', as well as the use of such images in internal policy and diplomacy.

Natalia Królikowska-Jedlińska
(Warsaw)

(Translated by Anna Kijak,
proofreading Yelizaveta Crofts)

Björn Schrader, *Die Geographisierung der Nation: Der Beitrag der Geographie zum nationalen Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich 1789–1914*, Leipzig: Leibniz-Institut für Länderkunde, 2015, 464 pp., Beiträge zur regionalen Geographie, vol. 67

The extensive work of Björn Schrader takes inspiration from two research traditions. The first is the critical history of geography represented in Germany by such scholars as Hans-Dietrich Schultz and Ute Wardenga, and in France by, without limitation, Marie-Claire Robic. The way of understanding the role of geographical sciences characteristic for the scholars mentioned above is also shared by the author of the reviewed book. According to him geography, like history, constituted a tool for formulating national ideas, with the use of language appropriate to a given discipline. The author's second point of reference is the German-French imagology practised, in the main, by Michael Jeismann. Like researchers of national stereotypes Schrader deals with the image of the neighbour and of his own country, however not expressed in the typical form of national characterology, but rather in the reflection of space. *Die Geographisierung der Nation* is also a valuable supplementation of both these research traditions due to the time-framework of the analysis. The majority of his predecessors focused on the period of dynamic growth of nationalism which correlated with the sharpest phase of the French-German conflict, starting from 1870 and ending in 1918. Schrader deliberately concentrates on an earlier period, between the Vienna Congress and Franco-Prussian War. The source basis of the work is an extensive selection of German and French professional publications: textbooks and scientific articles, as well as maps and atlases. Reproductions of maps and schemes are an integral part of the book.

The book consists of an introduction, prologue, two large sections on French and German geographers, conclusion and appendices. 'Geographization' or 'geographizing', understood by the author as the process of creating spatial identity in both analysed countries, in this approach consists of several elements. The most important seems to be the concept of natural borders, which occurs both in Germany and in France. Another is geographical harmony (or lack thereof) and the issue of symbolic place in Europe of a given country, for example at its centre, a position to which both countries aspired for some time. Schrader also

analyses French and German descriptions of disputable territories: Alsace and Lorraine, the banks of the Rhine, and eastern regions of France. Both analytical parts of the work are concluded with sub-chapters on the neighbour's image in geographical publications.

The dominant arrangement by subject is overlapped by chronologically arranged fragments. The opening is quite distinctive in this respect — that is, the revolutionary concepts of French borders, and German reactions to the invasion of Napoleon — and the conclusion, that is, the scientific repercussions of French defeat in 1871. Except for these instances the author moves quite freely in time, following particular motifs in scientific literature which either occur in both countries at the same time, or clearly earlier and more intensely in one of them. In practice this means wandering from one geographer to another in search of a series of adjustments to the definition of national borders. The author diligently records exceptions from the dominant approach in a given period, not forgetting to mention which analysed geographers were in the mainstream of their discipline and which took a marginal position. Such an approach has, of course, advantages — first of all, a clarity and logic of reasoning. It also has cognitive value. Schrader's book may play the role of a biographical dictionary of second line scholars, less known and less acclaimed colleagues of Alexander von Humboldt, Paul Vidal de la Blache or Friedrich Ratzel. On the other hand, such narrative style makes the reading tiring at times, since the richness of material is disproportionate to the short list of issues with which the book deals.

The most important of these issues is the naturalization of borders. As the author rightly states, the conviction that a country has natural borders, not necessarily overlapping the current state borders, was the foundation on which geographical national identity could develop. This stage occurred more quickly in Germany than in France, which was mainly due to Napoleon's territorial expansion. The radically different political situation of both countries — a European power on one side and an amorphous union of states and mini-states on the other — influenced scientific discussion which in France maintained for a long time a paradigm of political geography, which already had ceased to be popular in Germany at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

The concept of natural borders concurred with geographical concepts covering the whole continent, and also, perhaps surprisingly, with elements of aesthetics. The former aimed to shape Europe politically in a way which would contribute to maintaining peace in the future. Although (at least according to the declaration of its creators) the same idea was a leading one in twentieth century geopolitics, Schrader demonstrates that in the first half of the nineteenth century there were scholars who dealt with such issues under the influence of humanist idealism, not under that of poorly disguised imperialism. Aesthetics, on the other hand, played a central role in French concepts of the state's territorial harmony. A very interesting section of Schrader's work describes traditions of inscribing a country into geometric shapes, most frequently a hexagon or

pentagon. Appendices to the book include, without limitation, inventories of such spatial metaphors in French geographical literature, which focussed much more on itself intellectually than did the literature of Germany.

The harmony of real or proposed national territory was more frequently looked for in geomorphological and hydrographic factors than in geometric shapes. Their specific character, land-form or watercourse arrangement did not play a central role. The uniformity of a national territory was as often celebrated by geographers as was its diversity. The former was supposed to demonstrate a set of common elements of which a homeland consisted. The latter, a complementarity of regions which being so different from each other, all together created a harmonious, ideally closed entity. The motif of harmony within a defined geographical space did not preclude the perception of one's country as the core of a larger region, an intermediary and political centre. Nor was it an exclusively defensive argument. Achieving geographical harmony could either call for annexation of territories characteristically similar to one's own borderline regions or, the reverse — of territories with characteristics entirely different, and so perhaps seemingly complementary to those already within the control of an aggressor state.

It's not only in this case that geographers have had to face logical contradictions. Rivers have sometimes been treated as natural borders, but more often geographers have seen them as the opposite of a border line, a factor linking the areas on both sides of the river and thus creating a geographical region. There could be strategic advantages to choosing to round off certain border sections, but also, though much less frequently, to retire from a part of one's own territory. What certain authors called geographic chaos, others treated as expression of richness and variety; often their opinion depended on whether a given scholar looked at his own country or the lands abroad. In a majority of cases described in the book such motifs appeared in various political contexts for both countries. This is why the exceptions, scientific constructions dominant in one country and marginal or absent in the other, seem even more interesting. The geometrical view mentioned above is one of these. The tradition of inscribing the homeland into a geometric figure is clearly French. In Germany, the metaphor of the centre as a basis for the concept of *Mittleuropa* played a similar role. The focus of geographers from the Reich became the argument that the influence of their civilization gave nations the right to political power over a given benefiting territory. Work, this 'German effort' which German scholars wrote about, imprinted itself on the cultural landscape far exceeding the state borders, and shaping the space called by Albrecht Penck 'deutscher Kulturboden' at the beginning of the 1920s.

Björn Schrader's book shows how long and various traditions such concepts had, as until recent times they were mainly associated with politically involved geographers of the twentieth century. The majority of motifs he deals can be found in various schools of geopolitics and anthropogeography, *Ost- and Westforschung*, in the interwar period.

If something important is missing in this catalogue, it is probably only colonialism, which found ideological carriers among geographers of both countries. It is true that overseas possessions — both real ones and those which remained a mirage — were not included in national territory *sensu stricto*, but, as Schrader rightly mentions, geographizing a nation was defined by the nature of the homeland, only in the perception of geographers. In reality they were the sole arbiters.

Maciej Górny
(Warsaw)

(Translated by Elżbieta Petrajtis-O'Neill,
proofreading Yelizaveta Crofts)

Najmniej jestem tam, gdzie jestem... Listy Zofii z Vorzimmerów Breustedt z Warszawy i getta warszawskiego do córki Marysi w Szwajcarii (1939–1942), introduction, elaboration and commentaries by Elżbieta Orman, translation of German-language letters by Elżbieta Wrońska, Cracow: Fundacja Centrum Dokumentacji Czynu Niepodległościowego; Księgarnia Akademicka, 2016, 320 + XXXVI pp.

The title of this unique book is taken from the following fragment of a letter sent on 18 March 1941: ‘My longings go in five different directions of the world. The least of me is where I am’.¹ The editor Elżbieta Orman explains in a footnote: ‘In the direction of her daughter Marysia, who lived in Riehen in Switzerland, her husband Hans in Austria, her mother Róża living in Lwów, her brothers: Henryk, a POW in Arnswalde (now Choszczno in Poland) in Germany, and Tadeusz, who — in her imagination — lived somewhere in Russia” (p. 218) From the impressive introduction to this edition (entitled ‘In the eye of micro-history or about the fate of a Polish family of Jewish roots during the Holocaust’ and 120 pages long!) and from the valuable 354 footnotes, one may find a lot of additional information about the aforementioned people. Marysia Breustedt was the daughter of Zofia, who herself was born in Lwów in 1896, and of Zofia’s husband, a German called Hans-Joachim (1901–1994) whom she married in Florence in 1922, both of them being painters. Zofia’s mother Róża was from a completely assimilated family of Lwów bookkeepers Altenbergs, a great asset to Polish culture. Zofia’s stepbrother was Henryk Wereszycki (1898–1990), now considered one of the foremost Polish historians, an expert on the nineteenth century, member of Piłsudski’s legions, the Polish Military Organization, and a participant in the war of 1920.² Zofia’s brother Tadeusz

¹ ‘Moje tęsknoty idą w pięciu różnych kierunkach świata. Najmniej jestem tam, gdzie jestem’.

² Compare Henryk Wereszycki (1898–1990). *Historia w życiu historyka*, ed. Elżbieta

(1900–1940) also fought in the Legions and in the Polish-Bolshevik war. Both he and Henryk changed their surname in 1924 from Vorzimmer to Wereszycki (they remembered the Wereszyca River from the battles in the East against Bolsheviks in 1920), and six years later they converted to Catholicism. The reserve officer captain Tadeusz Wereszycki, a prisoner of NKVD camp in Starobielsk, was shot in Kharkiv in spring of 1940.³ It is no coincidence that the Centre of Documentation of Independence Acts is a co-publisher of this book. Tadeusz Wereszycki was awarded in 1937 with the Cross of Independence; he was also a recipient of the Lwów Defence Cross and Lwów Eaglets Badge, and in 1938 his brother was decorated with the Medal of Independence.

The publication in question contains 106 letters, of which Zofia née Vorzimmer Breustedt authored 75, the vast majority. The book concludes with document no. 107, which the institution of proceedings in 1952 to declare her dead. Besides Zofia's letters to her daughter we also get insight into her correspondence with her mother Róża, her sister in law Tadeusz's wife Krystyna née Oppenheim Wereszycka, and friends in Switzerland. Thanks to the mail service, which operated in the ghetto, Zofia was in touch with her brothers, with relatives staying in the United States and with her husband, a Wehrmacht soldier. None of the letters which Zofia received survive. Sensing the nearness of death, she burnt them.

I want to concentrate on several letters published in this volume. Here is a fragment of a letter sent on 28 January 1941 from the Warsaw ghetto to Lily Loffler, who took care of Marysia Breustedt in Switzerland: 'Everything is so different in this country in which I am now living, where I do not understand the exotic language which is spoken and where everything, everything is so alien' (p. 211).⁴ This time the editor gives a necessary explanation to this text in the footnote: 'Due to the censorship of correspondence in the ghetto Zofia used the "Aesop language" in her letters; the expression "in this country" means the Warsaw ghetto. Zofia was a Pole of Jewish origin, also assimilated with German culture thanks to her husband. She felt a stranger in the ghetto, she did not know Jewish culture, religion and the Yiddish language'.⁵

Orman and Antoni Cetnarowicz, Cracow, 2001. Besides the bibliography of Wereszycki's texts the publication contains about a dozen very valuable works on the life and work of this scholar and memoirs of his colleagues and students. One of them, Jerzy W. Borejsza, published in *Przegląd Polski* (2014, no. 123, pp. 94–112) a fascinating interview which he had with his Master in 1981.

³ *Rozstrzelani w Charkowie*, ed. Maria Skrzyńska-Pławińska, Warsaw, 1996, p. 210, Indeks Represjonowanych, vol. 2.

⁴ 'Wszystko jest tak niezwykle w tym kraju, gdzie teraz żyję, gdzie nie rozumiem tej egzotycznej mowy, którą się tu mówi i gdzie wszystko, wszystko jest tak obce'.

⁵ 'Ze względu na cenzurę korespondencji w getcie Zofia posługiwała się w listach ezopowym językiem; użyte tutaj sformułowanie "w tym kraju" oznacza getto warszawskie. Zofia była Polką pochodzenia żydowskiego, dzięki mężowi zasymilowaną także z kulturą niemiecką. W getcie czuła się obco, nie znała żydowskiej kultury, religii i języka jidysz'.

Probably most moving is the farewell letter sent by Zofia to her husband Hans Joachim on 25 July 1942: 'It is Saturday evening and I am writing this letter as I lie after working for three days in the factory standing for 13 hours per day. At 6.00 a.m. I stand in the queue to work. I leave at 7.30 p.m., a break at noon, just enough time to eat soup. [...] I spent last night on packing letters. I burnt your letters and so on. and in part I got ready for death, because if Grandma [Zofia's mother Róża Vorzimmer née Altenberg, who came from Lwów and stayed in the ghetto with Zofia — T. S.] had to go [to Umschlagplatz — T. S.], of course I would go with her' (p. 276).⁶ We know that this happened on 16 August 1942 — they were both murdered in Treblinka gas chambers.

The last two letters published in this book were written by Henryk Wereszycki. He sent the first of them from Cracow on 4 October 1945 to his niece Marysia. He sent the information about the family's fate to Switzerland: 'As you probably know, no one from our family survived. Tazio was the first. He is buried somewhere in Katyń [only years later it emerged that he was shot in Khar-kiv — T. S.]. Zośka and Granny were murdered at the end of July 1942 in Warsaw, probably on the spot — not in the crematorium [probably on 17 August 1942 in Treblinka — T. S.]. I only know that they both were prepared for what was to come, although they were the first. When the murderers came and read Zośka's surname, Granny caught her arm and they both went bravely to face death. Kryisia [Tadeusz Wereszycki's wife, in fact his widow — T. S.] was with children [Andrzej, born 1935 and Jan, born 1939 — T. S.] and her mother [Karola Oppenheim née Bergson — T. S.] in Dobra near Nowy Sącz, where her sister Maryla (Spät) and one of their cousins — a painter — arrived. Maryla was recognized, of course she had a different surname. The Gestapo asked who Kryisia was — she obviously denied that she was a relative, but unfortunately, the children said: "this is our aunty!". So all of them were murdered in October or November 1942 in Nowy Sącz prison' (p. 286).⁷ A letter to Henryk's brother in law, also sent from Cracow, is dated 31 July 1946. Henryk Wereszycki writes to him, a German, 'Dear Hans!

⁶ 'Dzisiaj sobota wieczór, piszę teraz ten list, leżąc po tym, jak już trzy dni pracuję w fabryce po 13 godzin dziennie na stojąco. O 6.00 rano ustawiam się w kolejce do pracy. Wychodzę o 7.30 wieczorem, przerwa w południe, tyle tylko, żeby można zjeść zupę. [...] Dzisiaj w nocy cały czas pakowałam listy. Twoje listy spaliłam itd. i przygotowałam się częściowo na śmierć, bo gdyby Babunia musiała iść, poszłabym naturalnie z nią'.

⁷ 'Jak zapewne wiesz, nikt z naszych nie pozostał przy życiu. Tazio poszedł jako pierwszy. Leży gdzieś w Katyniu. Zośkę i Babunię zamordowano pod koniec lipca 1942 r. w Warszawie, prawdopodobnie na miejscu — nie w krematorium. Wiem tylko tyle, że obie były przygotowane na to, co miało przyjsć, chociaż były pierwszymi. Kiedy mordercy przyszl i wyczytali nazwisko Zośki, Babunia chwyciła Zosię za ramię i tak obie wyszły dzielnie naprzeciw śmierci. Kryisia była z dziećmi i matką w Dobrej koło Nowego Sącza, gdzie przyjechała jej siostra Maryla (Spät) i jedna z ich kuzynek — malarka. Maryla została rozpoznana — oczywiście nosiła inne nazwisko. Gestapo zapytało, kim jest Kryisia — ona naturalnie zaparła się, że jest krewną, na nieszczęście maluchy powiedziały: to jest ciocia! Tak więc wszyscy oni zostali zamordowani w październiku albo w listopadzie 1942 r. w więzieniu w Nowym Sączu'.

[...] Throughout the war I thought about you, always with sympathy, and I always asked about you, first to Zośka and then Marysia. Zosia and Granny died in July 1942. Kryisia, her sons, mother, sister, nephew and cousin were denounced in October 1942 in a certain village near Nowy Sącz and murdered there' (p. 288).⁸ It follows that one of the locals denounced them.

An additional value of the reviewed book is its images, closely connected with the text. It rarely happens that we see such a perfect selection of illustrations, and the photos of the people mentioned in the text are also perfect in the technical sense. I also want to mention that thanks to this publication the works of both artists — painters Zofia and Hans-Joachim Breustedt — have been saved from oblivion. 84 illustrations are placed on 36 numbered inserts. Only one group photo is technically poor, but it is accompanied by a poignant comment: 'From the left Stefa (H. Wereszycki's fiancée), Inka (daughter of Maryla née Oppenheim Spät), Karola Oppenheim (Maryla and Krystyna's mother), Maryla Spät, Zofia Breustedt, Krystyna née Oppenheim Wereszycka with her sons Jasio and Jędrrek. All of the people in this photo were murdered in the period 1942–1944' (photo no. 54).⁹

For seventy years the majority of the letters sent by Elżbieta Orman had been kept by their recipient Maria Breustedt in her Swiss flat. They would have probably never reached Polish reader, had Maria had not received a package in 2001 containing a collective work about Henryk Wereszycki, mentioned in footnote two, a publication in homage to her famous uncle. Maria decided that her mother also deserved to be remembered by the Polish people, and that publishing letters from the ghetto may help achieve this. Since Orman was a co-editor of the collective volume, Maria delivered Zofia's letters to her and asked to publish them. She probably also took efforts to publish the correspondence received not only from her mother but also from her father in Switzerland. This book was published in 2015,¹⁰ but Maria Breustedt did not live to see it. She died in Vevey at the age of 92 and so never managed to enjoy the Polish edition either.

This edition would have not been published if Orman had not won the cooperation of Elżbieta Wrońska, an excellent translator who translated the majority of the letters from German into Polish. We should keep in mind that Zofia writes to Marysia in both languages. Other people who participated in this correspondence, such as Henryk Wereszycki, were also fluent in both languages.

⁸ 'Kochany Hansie! [...] Przez całą wojnę myślałem o Tobie zawsze bardzo serdecznie i zawsze pytałem się o Ciebie, najpierw Zośki, potem Marysi. Zosia i Babunia zmarły w lipcu 1942 r. Kryisia, jej chłopcy, matka, siostra, siostrzeniec i kuzynka zostały w październiku 1942 r. zdradzone w pewnej wsi pod Nowym Sączem i tam zamordowane'.

⁹ 'Od lewej Stefa (narzeczona H. Wereszyckiego), Inka (córka Maryli z Oppenheimów Spät), Karola Oppenheim (matka Maryli i Krystyny), Maryla Spät, Zofia Breustedt, Krystyna z Oppenheimów Wereszycka z synami Jasiem i Jędrkiem. Wszystkie osoby z tej fotografii zostały zamordowane w latach 1942–1944'.

¹⁰ Hans-Joachim und Sophie Breustedt, *An Marysia. Eine Familiengeschichte in Briefen 1935–1950*, ed. Helga Hofer, Salzburg and Vienna, 2015.

We know that in Oflag he taught his colleague — a fellow prisoner Adam Rapacki — the German language (in 1956–68 Rapacki was the Minister of Foreign Affairs in the People’s Republic of Poland), and the latter responded in kind by teaching the historian Italian.

There are several reasons for which the publication should be considered a model one. The introduction is in fact a separate scientific study. The footnotes are comparable to those which Hanna Kirchner included in *Dzienniki* (The Journals) of the great writer Zofia Nałkowska, and I see no competition in the selection of illustrations. This is, in any case, not the first editorial project realized by Elżbieta Orman. Let me remind you of the correspondence of the great historians Stefan Kieniewicz and Henryk Wereszycki published by her several years ago and still widely admired.¹¹

Maciej Janowski ended his beautiful text concerning the reviewed book with the following very wise reflection: ‘There are numerous texts about how much “Polishness”, understood as a multicultural whole, lost due to the Holocaust. There was less reflection on how much the Polish intelligentsia lost, by losing such a core part of itself as the generation of assimilated patriotic intelligentsia of Jewish roots, which contributed to “Polishness” some kind of otherness, which is difficult to define. [...] What would Polish intelligentsia look like today, if people such as the characters in this book still constituted its integral part — unfortunately, we can only imagine’.¹²

On 9 May 2017 Elżbieta Orman was awarded for her work with the prestigious historical award of *Polityka* weekly in the source publication category. Those present strongly applauded the decision of the jury.

Tomasz Szarota

(Warsaw)

(Translated by Elżbieta Petrajtis-O’Neill,
proofreading Yelizaveta Crofts)

¹¹ Stefan Kieniewicz — Henryk Wereszycki. *Korespondencja z lat 1947–1990*, introduction, elaboration Elżbieta Orman, Cracow, 2013 (792 pages!).

¹² ‘O tym, ile polskość, rozumiana jako wielokulturowa całość, straciła z powodu zagłady Żydów, pisano już wielokrotnie. Mniej może zastanawiano się nad tym, ile straciła inteligencja polska, tracąc tak istotną swoją część, jaką było pokolenie zasymilowanej patriotycznej inteligencji pochodzenia żydowskiego, które przecież wносиło do polskości jakąś trudną do sprecyzowania odmiennosc. [...] Jak dziś wyglądałaby polska inteligencja, gdyby nadal jej częścią składową byli ludzie tacy, jak bohaterowie omawianej książki — możemy niestety tylko sobie wyobrazić’, Maciej Janowski, ‘“Nocą słyszę, jak coraz bliżej, drżąc i grając krąg się zaciska...”’, *Ale historia*, 2017, 18, pp. 6–7 (*Gazeta Wyborcza Supplement*, 2 May 2017).