

Adrian Jusupović, *Kronika halicko-wołyńska (Kronika Romanowiczów) w latopisarskiej kolekcji historycznej* [The Halych-Volhynian Chronicle in the Annalistic Historical Tradition], Cracow: Avalon; Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 2019, 204 pp. (with illustrations)

As is well-known, no clear-cut or generally accepted order of succession developed among the princes of Old Rus', and variations on the notion of partible inheritance of possessions and power played out among members of the Riurikid house until the fifteenth century. Such forms of inauguration-ritual as enthronement took place, with churches often serving as venues and senior churchmen officiating,<sup>1</sup> yet Latin Christian notions of coronation (let alone unction performed by a prelate) as a constitutive act did not gain purchase in Rus' political culture. Consequently, the allocation of princely 'seats' and possessions, and issues of seniority within a 'principality' (itself a mutable construct), was an apple of discord between those having a genealogical or geographical case. So, too, was the right to control the paramount seat of Kyiv (Kiev). One contender was an ambitious prince who had spent some time as master of Volhynia, Roman Mstislavich. He managed to seize control of Kyiv and, briefly, to maintain there a compliant lesser prince. However, upon Roman's death in battle in 1205, his two small sons and heirs had slim chance of any hold over the main seats in the south-west. Their Byzantine-born mother looked to the Hungarian king, Andrew II, who gave asylum to her elder son. These fertile, accessible and populous regions of the south-west drew in contenders from the other branches of the Rus' princely house, along with non-Rus' potentates, not least the Hungarian ruler himself. The configurations of rival princes' seats and territorial dominions remained in flux for more than a generation. The death in 1228 of Mstislav Mstislavich, long ensconced in Halych, took a dominant figure out of the arena. But it was essentially thanks to the aegis of the irresistible Mongol khans that Roman's elder son, Daniel, secured lasting hegemony in the south-west, in the mid-1240s. By this time, the sacked city of Kyiv had little to offer a prince, even in terms of the prestige accruing from residence there.

These features of political culture, especially the looseness of inauguration-ritual within the confines of the Riurikid 'blood-group', brought a certain edge to historical writing and rewriting in Rus'. Records — or purported records — could serve the practical purpose of determining which prince held what at the behest of whom, along with their birth-dates and ancestry, besides

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<sup>1</sup> See now Alexandra Vukovich, 'Enthronement in Early Rus: Between Byzantium and Scandinavia', *Viking and Medieval Scandinavia*, 14, 2018, pp. 211–39 (p. 219).

details of pacts made between them and, occasionally, the ‘testament’ of a dying prince. More broadly, they could also glorify the deeds, piety and other accomplishments of a present-day prince or a long-dead heroic ancestor, in hopes of legitimizing this prince’s regime and improving the succession prospects of his heir or heirs. Creating a credibly positive narrative was — and indeed still is — indispensable to any regime heavily reliant on election or negotiation for legitimization. How effective such means were is open to question, and only very rarely do hints survive of the nature of the relationship between a chronicler and a princely court. One could make a case for downplaying the political significance of the relationship, in that the writer (or team of writers) was in clerical or monastic orders and might therefore exert autonomous judgement, especially if there was a ‘rapid turnover’ in princes at the nearest major seat. Furthermore, the number of persons aware of the composition or maintenance of a chronicle at any one time is likely to have been modest, while those capable of reading it would mostly have been clergymen, too. However, the inter-princely agreements sealed by ‘kissing the cross’ were not infrequently overseen by bishops,<sup>2</sup> and one should not underestimate the capacity of princes and their entourages to consult, or seek to rewrite, the contents of a chronicle. Besides, the foundation-myth of the Riurikid dynasty is a principal feature of the *Povest’ vremennykh let*, which was incorporated in many later chronicles.

The *Povest’ vremennykh let*, in highlighting Kyiv as ‘the mother of Rus’ cities’,<sup>3</sup> broadcast what status attached to a prince in control there and itself served to keep the city at the centre of the political arena. Yet the profusion of contenders for princely seats in the south-west after 1205 lessened the chances of anyone proving able to combine effective dominion there with control over Kyiv. From the above considerations, one might *a priori* expect that this ‘game of thrones’ would prompt the composition of narratives devoted to goings-on in Halych and Volodymyr-in-Volhynia. Such expectations are met by the text known as the *Halych-Volhynian Chronicle* (henceforth *H-VC*), which covers the period from around the death of Roman up to the events of the year 1289. The first twenty years or so represent something of a jumble, partly because of the ‘rapid turnover’ in princes but also because of confusions in the sequence of events. Greater coherence sets in thereafter, with the figure of Daniel Romanovich looming large. But only towards the middle years of the century are his actions recounted in discursive detail, leading scholars to discern some sort of *Svod* (Compilation) made under his auspices beneath the text of the *H-VC* as it now stands. After Daniel’s death in 1264 his brother Vasil’ko, ensconced in the city of Volodymyr-in-Volhynia takes centre-stage,

<sup>2</sup> Yulia Mikhailova and David K. Prestel, ‘Cross Kissing: Keeping One’s Word in Twelfth-Century Rus’’, *Slavic Review*, 70, 2011, 1, pp. 1–22.

<sup>3</sup> These prophetic words are put into the mouth of Oleg, upon seizing Kyiv and installing the boy Igor as prince there: *Povest’ vremennykh let*, ed. Varvara P. Adrianova-Peretts and Dmitrii S. Likhachev (rev. ed. Mikhail B. Sverdlov), Moscow, 1996, p. 14.

followed by one of Vasil'ko's sons. This son, named (confusingly) Vladimir, receives even more elaborate treatment. His death in 1289 prompts a lengthy encomium from the *H-VC* whose text, in its extant form, does not extend much further. A link between Vladimir Vasil'kovich and the *H-VC* (or its immediate predecessor) suggests itself.

These contours of the *H-VC* are more or less common ground to specialists. However, many aspects remain unclear. Fresh bids to address the confusion of the *H-VC*'s earlier part and to elucidate its subsequent parts are therefore welcome. Adrian Jusupović is unusually well qualified to do so. Having (jointly with Dariusz Dąbrowski) edited and translated into Polish the text of the *H-VC*,<sup>4</sup> he has also published an enlightening study on the region's political history.<sup>5</sup> He brings these skills to bear in the book under review, equipping it with an admirable Chronological Table. The subject is, as he puts it, 'first and foremost the chronological strategy of the *H-VC* but secondly, and closely connected with this, the narrative strategy' (p. 155). It is worth giving the essence of Jusupović's theses here. The *H-VC*'s opening parts draw heavily on the 'Kyivan Grand Princely Chronicle'. The authors responsible for coverage of the late twelfth and earlier thirteenth century favoured Riurik Rostislavich, at once the father-in-law and formidable rival of Roman Mstislavich. Unsurprisingly, this work, termed by Jusupović the 'Rostislavichi Chronicle', was inimical to Roman: its original notice about his death was critical, and we know of its unflattering portrayal only thanks to the learned Jan Długosz, who had access to an 'uncensored' version of the 'Rostislavichi Chronicle'. The 'Rostislavichi Chronicle' is transmitted via the *H-VC*, whose surviving form incorporates diverse sources, including eyewitness reports. Among these sources could well be Roman's second wife and her circle: identifiable as Euphrosyne-Anna, daughter of Isaac II Angelos, she may be responsible for such details as the journeying of herself and her small sons.<sup>6</sup> The *H-VC*'s structure becomes tighter and more coherent from 1228 onwards, and this reflects the departure of Prince Mstislav Mstislavich from the scene. Jusupović detects a clear narrative strategy in play henceforth. This is perhaps most blatant in the form of the words put into the mouth of the dying Mstislav, addressing Daniel: he confesses to having 'sinned' in withholding Halych from Daniel and, heeding a mendacious counsellor, handing it over to a 'foreigner'.<sup>7</sup> For its

<sup>4</sup> *Kronika halicko-wołyńska: (Kronika Romanowiczów / Chronica Galiciano-Voliniana: Chronica Romanoviciana)*, ed. Dariusz Dąbrowski and Adrian Jusupović, Cracow and Warsaw, 2017, MPH s.n., vol. 16 (hereafter *Kronika / Chronica*); *Kronika halicko-wołyńska (Kronika Romanowiczów)*, transl. and ed. Dariusz Dąbrowski and Adrian Jusupović, Cracow and Warsaw, 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Adrian Jusupović, *Elity ziemi halickiej i wołyńskiej w czasach Romanowiczów (1205–1269): Studium prozopograficzne*, Cracow, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Jusupović, *Kronika halicko-wołyńska* (hereafter Jusupović), pp. 34–37, 44. See also Alexander V. Maiorov, 'The Daughter of a Byzantine Emperor — the Wife of a Galician-Volhynian Prince', *Byzantinoslavica*, 72, 2014, pp. 188–233.

<sup>7</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, p. 124; Jusupović, p. 68.

coverage of the period from 1228 until 1244, the *H-VC*'s framework is, for the most part, firmly chronological. It most probably derives from a laudatory narrative, and Jusupović draws attention to a statement about rebellious boiars that can only have been written during Daniel's lifetime.<sup>8</sup> However, the text has been reworked slightly so as to write into the story Daniel's brother and successor, Vasil'ko. Through analysis of occasionally manifest insertions and the occurrence of the dual form in the *H-VC*, Jusupović shows how episodes originally 'starring' Daniel alone were reworked so as to give Vasil'ko a part in the action (pp. 76–77, 83–84).

For the following period, from 1244 until around 1260, the formatting of the *H-VC* changes, and this owes much to the *Svod* of Daniel, which seems to have been composed at the start of the 1260s. The framework becomes less clear-cut, due to a profusion of parallel accounts; these are organised thematically, making flashbacks or pursuing the course of events years ahead of subsequent sections in the text. It was, presumably, the original author of the *Svod* who wrote in justification of this departure from the narrative strategy of year-by-year entries. He asserts 'the duty of the chronographer (*kronograf*) to write about everything and all that has happened', invoking *inter alia* the 'Greek' and 'Roman' systems of reckoning, and 'how Eusebius the Pamphylia and other chronographers have written'.<sup>9</sup> Ranking himself in the tradition of the celebrated Eusebius of Caesarea<sup>10</sup>, the author was aspiring to the loftiest cultural heights, with the aim of further dignifying and legitimizing Daniel's regime. Highly educated, he probably belonged in some sense to the prince's circle, drawing on his own experiences, oral informants (perhaps including Daniel himself), and also on the princely archive. He gives an extensive account of Daniel's journey to the Mongol Horde in 1245/46 and his obeisance before Khan Baty; he received a patent (*iarlyk*) of authority at the court of the Khan.<sup>11</sup> Only from around this time did Daniel's hegemony in the south-west become more or less assured, and the chronicle's change in narrative strategy is itself a product of this. Also quite full is the account of the coronation of Daniel performed by a papal legate in 1254, likewise serving to enhance legitimacy.<sup>12</sup> So, too, does the description of the building-works and the church furnishings at Chełm, which Daniel sought to make a sacral centre, if not his principal seat.<sup>13</sup> That these episodes should feature Daniel alone is scarcely surprising, given their accent on his unique status. However, as Jusupović observes, the insertions that were later made to highlight the role of Vasil'ko (based in Volodymyr-in-Volhynia) are fairly restrained

<sup>8</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, pp. 154, 155–56.; Jusupović, pp. 76–77.

<sup>9</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, p. 331; Jusupović, p. 102.

<sup>10</sup> Eusebius' admiration for his mentor Pamphilus (martyred in 310) was such that he took to naming himself 'ho tou Pamphilou', a form which the *H-VC*'s usage reflects.

<sup>11</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, pp. 287–94.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 349–51.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 395–404.

for the period from 1244 until around 1260: essentially, they amount to the adding of Vasil'ko's name or, simply, the use of the dual. The explanation for such forbearance offered by Jusupović (p. 111) is convincing: in effect, the detail and the density of the text recounting Daniel's activities and works may have daunted the subsequent redactor(s) and, accordingly, the text of Daniel's *Svod* for this period was left relatively untouched. The self-proclaimed 'duty of the chronographer [of Daniel] to write about everything and all that has happened' seems, ironically, to have spared his text from major reworking!

Towards the end of the reign of Daniel another change in narrative strategy is discernible. The *H-VC*'s framework is, once more, essentially chronological and the figure of Vasil'ko looms ever larger. His activities from his seat at Volodymyr-in-Volhynia receive fuller coverage, and the tone is no longer unequivocally laudatory of Daniel. On occasion, his conduct incurs contempt, as when he is described as 'fleeing to the Poles, and from the Poles to the Hungarians'. As Jusupović remarks, adducing evidence from Latin sources, he most probably went in quest of allies against fresh Mongol inroads, and the chronicle is significantly shy about Vasil'ko's collaboration with the Mongols around this time.<sup>14</sup> Chronicle-writing could well have continued at the court of Daniel after his death in 1264, as witness the eulogy incorporated in the *H-VC*. One may reasonably suppose that by this time more than one narrative was being composed, on behalf not only of Vasil'ko but also of other major players, notably the son of Daniel, Shvarn, who was probably based at Chełm (Kholm). He receives full, sometimes downright partisan, coverage and this could, as Jusupović cautiously surmises, derive from a Continuation of Daniel's *Svod* written at his court, or even from 'some *Svod* of Shvarn' (p. 121). However, by 1269 Shvarn had died, seemingly childless, and that same year saw the death of Vasil'ko. As Jusupović observes, it is uncertain whether any prince gained hegemony after the death of Daniel, or whether 'there were several decision-making centres' (p. 121). This illustrates our suggestion made above, that sponsorship of historical writing was itself of considerable use to players in 'the game of thrones'.

Historical writing was deemed useful by the prince who emerged as predominant in the later decades of the thirteenth century, Vladimir Vasil'kovich. Sometime in the 1280s a learned cleric drew heavily on the above-mentioned narratives concerning south-west Rus' and began working on a Chronicle to set Vladimir morally (albeit not militarily) above other princes, notably his rival, Lev Danielovich, who could count Chełm among his seats. The signs of Vladimir's association with this Chronicle — whose contents will have been very similar, if not identical to the *H-VC* — have long aroused scholarly debate, and important observations have been made quite recently. For example, Oleksiy Tolochko pointed to the use of the 'September-year' for recording Vladimir's death in 1289, suggesting that recourse to such Byzantine-style chronology could be

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 415; Jusupović, p. 114.

connected with a bid for recognition of him as a saint.<sup>15</sup> Jusupović adds additional arguments, noting the use of the 'September-year' in the subsequent account of the viewing of Vladimir's uncorrupted body and final closure of his tomb.<sup>16</sup> He demonstrates the efforts made to depict Vladimir as not only exemplary Christian ruler but even a *filosof*. It may well have been the Chronicler himself who observed him close-up and could detail the progress of the disease (probably leprosy) that began by affecting his lower lip and eventually killed him.<sup>17</sup> The same author will have been responsible for the grandiloquent eulogy depicting Vladimir as monarch-bookman (*knizhnik*) and patron of learning, citing from memory parts of Ilarion's 'Sermon on Law and Grace'.<sup>18</sup> Jusupović brings out these facets of the work more fully than has been done before. He notes the Chronicle's wary handling of Lev Danielovich, criticising his periodic collaboration with the Mongols, yet depicting him in generally positive tones at times of joint-operations with Vladimir or other Rus' princes. And Jusupović discusses perceptively the detailed coverage of Vladimir's last days: *H-VC* cites two *gramoty* whereby Vladimir made financial provision for his widow and bequeathed his seat and lands to his nephew, Mstislav Danielovich, an act confirmed by the bishop of Volodymyr-in-Volhynia.<sup>19</sup> Here, too, one may detect the role of historical writing in the dynamics of inter-princely negotiations, so germane to Rus' political culture.

Inevitably much is speculative, and Jusupović stresses our ignorance as to when exactly work on the Continuation of the Chronicle ceased (p. 154): in theory, at least, it might have carried on through the reign of Mstislav Danielovich, whose end-date is itself uncertain. The closeness to, if not identifiability of, this Chronicle with our extant text (that is *H-VC*) is, accordingly, uncertain. And, given the difficulty in 'unscrambling' the inserts from the original text of the *Svod* of Daniel, one may wonder whether the inserts are all the work of the last redactor, as Jusupović avers (p. 154). Doubtless, textologists will weigh in with further reservations and suggestions, and some historical interpretations may occasionally be open to challenge. Thus one may doubt whether the *H-VC*'s brief mention of the murder in 1208 of 'the great Roman emperor (*ts'sar*) Philip [of Suabia] at the instigation of the [Hungarian] queen's brother' should be dismissed as, in effect, gossip. In giving Philip an imperial title, the *H-VC* registers the way in which his documents had been styling him, and there is no reason to query its essential point that Queen Gertrude, seeking to aid her brother (Bishop Ekbert of Bamberg), arranged for her infant daughter's betrothal to 'the son of the Landgrave [Herman of Thuringia], Loudovik (Louis)': Herman, a formidable

<sup>15</sup> Aleksei P. Tolochko, 'Proiskhozhdenie khronologii Ipat'evskogo spiska Galitsko-Volynskoi letopisi', *Palaeoslavica*, 13, 2005, pp. 81–108 (pp. 88–90).

<sup>16</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, p. 626; Jusupović, pp. 148–49.

<sup>17</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, pp. 587–88.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 589–93; Jusupović, pp. 141–42, 146–48.

<sup>19</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, pp. 553–65; Jusupović, pp. 137–38.

figure, enabled the bishop to return from the Hungarian court (where he had sought asylum after the murder) to his see.<sup>20</sup>

However, given the multi-layered nature of our sources along with the redactions made on behalf of rival or much later princes, such scholarly doubts and debate are inevitable, indeed desirable. Historical acumen and knowledge has seldom been harnessed to textological expertise in the *H-VC* to such good effect. Of particular value is the author's alertness to the political 'charge' of historical writing, the implications of the *H-VC* incorporating the text of the *Povest' vremennykh let* and the 'Kyivan Grand Princely Chronicle'. Jusupović has made an important contribution to the better understanding of our principal source for south-west Rus' in the thirteenth century. And he certainly attains his stated goal of elucidating 'the chronological [...] and narrative strategy' of the *H-VC*.

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Tomáš Homola, *Na vzostupe moci: Zahraničná politika Mateja Korvína v stredoeurópskom priestore v rokoch 1458–1471* [On the Rise of the Power: The Foreign Policy of Matthias Corvinus in the Central European Region in 1458–1471], Bratislava: VEDA, 2019, 192 pp.

For over one thousand years Slovakia was part of Hungary and then Czechoslovakia. Consequently, its history was often regarded by scholars as a fragment of the history of these two states. It was not until the 'divorce' with the Czechs in the early 1990s that Slovak historians could finally catch up by conducting research from 'their' perspective. The process of creating a new, 'national' historiography will certainly take time and we should wish our neighbours success in this venture.

This need to 'catch up' was behind the book analysed in this review. The young author (born in 1986) prepared his study, guided — as he writes — by two impulses. First, Slovakian historiography lacks reliable studies devoted to Matthias Corvinus, second — he is presented not as an independent monarch but as one of the elements of the Central European geopolitical set-up.

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<sup>20</sup> *Kronika / Chronica*, pp. 27–29; Jusupović, pp. 40–41. See *Die Urkunden König Philipps von Schwaben*, ed. Andrea Rzhacek and Renate Spreitzer, Wiesbaden, 2014, MGH, *Diplomata*, vol. 12; Peter Wiegand, 'Eheversprechen und Fürstenkoalition: Die Verbindung Elisabeths von Ungarn mit Ludwig von Thüringen als Baustein einer europäischen Allianz (1207/08–1210/11)', in *Elisabeth von Thüringen — eine europäische Heilige. Aufsätze*, ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, Petersberg, 2007, pp. 35–46. The wealth of mentions of Poles, Hungarians, Czechs and other Westerners and, even, familiarity with their culture, in the *H-VC* is brought out by the PhD thesis of Catherine Philippa Sykes, 'Latin Christians in the Literary Landscape of Early Rus, c. 988–1330', unpublished dissertation, Cambridge, 2017.



The author stresses that portraits of Matthias Corvinus by historians from various countries are in the 'national' spirit, which should be read as 'not quite objective'. He believes that a complete biography of this outstanding ruler by a scholar from Slovakia would be very desirable, but is a task for the future. The choice of Matthias Corvinus's politics in Central Europe seems to be a good decision. The king, known for his versatile activities in various fields, was very active in the sphere of foreign policy as well. It seems that his social policy achievements (replacement of elites, support of petty nobility against the oligarchs), extensive patronage of the arts and support for humanistic trends are better known than his actions on the international stage.

The title of the study features the term 'Central European area' and this makes it necessary for the author to explain the meaning of the term, which has a vast literature on the subject — particularly worthy of note in Poland is Jerzy Kłoczowski's contribution.<sup>1</sup> For Tomáš Homol'a the term denotes the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation as well as the Kingdoms of Hungary, Bohemia and Poland. Such an approach does not raise any doubts and neither does the author's chosen time frame. In 1458 Matthias Corvinus was proclaimed king, while the year 1471 was marked by the death of George of Poděbrady, among others. These thirteen years encompassed about one-third of Corvinus's reign, but were a clearly distinct period. Significantly, both Corvinus and George of Poděbrady did not come from traditional ruling dynasties but from the nobility, which is why they were often regarded as upstarts. Yet this similarity did nothing to resolve the long-standing conflict between them. The significance of 1471 is further enhanced by the fact that this was also the year of a change on the papal throne. Paul II, who looked favourably upon Corvinus, died and his successor, Sixtus IV, kept a far greater distance from Hungary's ruler.

The monarch, temperamental and prone to taking controversial decisions, has had a colourful portrait of himself painted by authors of sources and historiographers. Chronicles originating in Hungary idealized him; Antonio Bonfini, an Italian resident at the royal court, compared him — as was the fashion of the day — to Alexander the Great, Hannibal and Hercules. The man who broke ranks with the chorus of Matthias Corvinus's eulogists was the author of the so-called Dubnica Chronicle, who criticized both Corvinus and his father John Hunyadi for their aggressive policy towards Bohemia and Austria, which enabled the Ottoman Turks to attack southern Hungary. Bohemian sources — unsurprisingly — bore a grudge against Corvinus for fighting against George of Poděbrady, while Jan Długosz looked at him from the perspective of the Jagiellonian *raison d'état*. The Polish historian was surprised that the Hungarians chose a lowly born usurper instead of supporting the Jagiellons' rightful aspirations to the Hungarian throne. From the eighteenth

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Jerzy Kłoczowski, 'Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia i jej miejsce w Europie', *Rocznik Instytutu Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, 5, 2007, pp. 11–31; idem, 'Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia jako przedmiot badań', *KH*, 120, 2013, pp. 833–43.



century the picture of Corvinus based on chronicles was enriched thanks to the use of diplomatic sources. The nineteenth century, a time of 'national revival', brought a glorification of Matthias Corvinus in Hungary and George of Poděbrady in Bohemia. The high opinion of the latter — formulated by František Palacký, who reviled the King of Hungary as an enemy of the Bohemians — created a paradigm which continued to function in Czech literature for some time. Among the Hungarian studies, in addition to the earlier glorifications, there also emerged papers in which the view on Matthias Corvinus's reign was much more balanced.

The structure of the book under review is an example of a rather successful compromise. In nine successive chapters the author begins with the state of research, then proceeds to describe the difficult beginnings of Matthias Corvinus's reign and the 'emergence' of the monarch on the international stage in foreign policy; in addition, the author discusses heretical Bohemia as a destination of crusades. He goes on to analyse the imperial aspirations of the two neighbouring monarchs — Matthias Corvinus and George of Poděbrady — in the following chapter discusses the two rulers' wars in 1468–69, and then presents their frantic efforts to find allies in Europe towards end of the Bohemian king's reign. The analysis ends with the author's remarks on some principles and rules of foreign policy and diplomacy in Corvinus's times, with elements of symbolic communication. The book's narrative is largely chronological, although the author discusses some issues — important in his view — separately. All this makes up a fairly clear picture. Let us look now at some selected topics.

They include the legitimization of the power of the 'usurper'. The fifteen-year-old king had a regent, Siládi, to help him, but whether and for how long the regent wielded power is still a matter of discussion. Without settling the matter, as a reviewer I would like to point out that John of Luxembourg was elevated to the Bohemian throne at the age of fourteen and he immediately began to exercise his power, as is evidenced by the privileges he issued for the nobility. Thus it is easy to imagine a situation in which the fifteen-year-old Matthias Corvinus seized power and reigned on his own.

At times the author of the book gets slightly lost; for example, he stresses several times that because of the Thirteen Years' War Casimir Jagiellon did not get involved in the events in the south, and then he is surprised that the King of Poland did not take action against Corvinus — although he has already provided an explanation why this was the case.

The paths of the two 'upstart' rulers, Matthias Corvinus and George of Poděbrady, crossed constantly as a result of, among others, the similarity of their situations. Both had to prove their 'legitimacy', and both attracted the interest of the papacy, which — especially during the pontificate of Enea Silvio Bartolomeo Piccolomini, that is, Pius II — was obsessed with the idea of organizing an anti-Turkish crusade: both rulers were taken into account as possible leaders of such a venture.

The possibilities for Matthias Corvinus to pursue his own foreign policy increased considerably after his coronation in 1464. The monarch carefully

built up his position, entering into an anti-Ottoman alliance with Venice in 1463; in 1463–64 he mounted a successful military campaign in Bosnia with the financial support of the papacy and the Italian cities. From that moment Matthias Corvinus began to focus his attention on his international activities on Central Europe, on Bohemia and the lands of the German princes; there was also a clear rapprochement between him and the Hohenzollerns.

Hungarian-Bohemian relations evolved in line with the changes in the European configuration. Pope Pius II had a very clear hierarchy of priorities: his main enemy was the Turks, so a crusade against them could be led even by the Hussite king, George of Poděbrady. The situation became more complicated when in 1462 Pius II rejected the Compacts of Basel and his successor excommunicated the heretic king in 1466. Now the pope began to look for allies to crush George of Poděbrady for good. Matthias Corvinus was not yet taken into consideration, because he had to fight a rebellion in Transylvania and, together with Emperor Frederick III, he was planning to support Prince Skanderbeg of Albania; the Turkish threat was still there at the time. George of Poděbrady continued his usual activities. In 1462–64 he announced the well-known plan to create a union of European states which would stand together against the Turks. The plan had the potential to create a new balance of power on the European continent, because the leading forces in it — alongside Bohemia — were to have been Poland and France. This undermined the hitherto dominant position of the empire and the papacy. Matthias Corvinus decided to wait and see what would happen, although he did not refuse his support. Nothing came of George of Poděbrady's initiative, but the Bohemian king did not give up and in 1467–68 he once again tried to organize a similar alliance. This time the alliance was to have been clearly directed against the pope and the emperor, and was to have brought together the Duke of Milan, the Margrave of Brandenburg, the Saxon princes, the Kings of Poland and Denmark, all led by the King of France, Louis XI. The plan also provided for a convocation of an ecumenical council and limitation of the pope's power. Louis XI refused, because he had to fight a rebellion of the nobility and was in ongoing conflict with Duke Charles the Bold of Burgundy.

Homola devotes a short separate chapter to plans of crusades against the Kingdom of Bohemia. He mentions how the papacy urged Casimir Jagiellon of Poland to take on the challenge. The papacy's efforts were in vain, and Homola seems to be surprised by the Polish king's attitude. This may stem from a lack of familiarity with Roman Heck's study<sup>2</sup> on the Polish-Bohemian pact concluded in Głogów in 1462 with far-reaching mutual obligations. This suggests that Poland — not a priority for Corvinus, but still important — has not been carefully analysed by Homola. However, we have to agree that Casimir Jagiellon did seriously consider the prospects for the Bohemian throne, though not as a result of a military intervention but lawful election by the people of that country.

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<sup>2</sup> Roman Heck, *Zjazd głogowski w 1462 r.*, Wrocław, 1962.

Homola skilfully deals with the difficult question of whether Matthias Corvinus had any ambitions to become emperor, and if so, whether these ambitions were realistic. Such dreams must have existed; the pope and the emperor made such suggestions, but this may have been only a game to fuel the conflict between Matthias Corvinus and George of Poděbrady. In any case, there were more candidates for the highest secular dignity, for example Charles the Bold of Burgundy as well as George of Poděbrady, who even pursued an intense propaganda campaign for the purpose, citing the need for a structural reform in Germany. The question of the election of the King or Holy Roman Emperor sometimes eludes rational calculations — who would have thought, for example, that John of Luxembourg's father, Henry VII, who ruled the small duchy of Luxembourg, would become emperor.

The war between Matthias Corvinus and George of Poděbrady in 1468–69, which ended in an alliance, must have surprised many contemporary observers. The Hungarian king dreamed of marrying Casimir Jagiellon's daughter, Hedwig, in order to make it easier for himself to seize the Bohemian throne, but Poland's king was not interested. The war resulted in a state of diarchy in Bohemia, which lasted until Corvinus's death in 1490, with Corvinus's position certainly getting stronger along the way.

The highest point in Matthias Corvinus's foreign policy came probably in 1470, when the king met Emperor Frederick III in Vienna, hoping to win the support of both the pope and the emperor. The war between Matthias Corvinus and George of Poděbrady reflected a typical medieval pattern, with a lot of movement of armies but few battles.

Worthy of note is the information about George of Poděbrady challenging Matthias Corvinus to a duel if the latter refused to conclude a peace treaty. Homola cites the relevant sources, but unfortunately he does not provide a broader view on the matter. After all, a duel between rulers was one of the great dreams of the Middle Ages — to prevent bloodshed, the monarch winning the duel won the war. This ritual thread has been analysed by many scholars, including Johan Huizinga.<sup>3</sup> It is a pity that the young author of the book under review is not better versed in the literature on the subject.

After finishing his chronological narrative, Homola goes on to present the main principles of diplomacy in Matthias Corvinus's times, and to discuss symbolic communication and negotiations. Unfortunately, these fragments are the weakest parts of the book. If they were intended to 'lay the ground' for the author's analysis of the meanders of Corvinus's foreign policy, they should have been placed at the beginning of the book; it is hard to justify their position at its end — they are pointless there. When it comes to the content of these general reflections, they give rise to various doubts. Trying to present a topic a thorough

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<sup>3</sup> Johan Huizinga, *Jesień średniowiecza*, vol. 1, Warsaw, 1967, pp. 182 ff.; cf. for example Werner Goetz, 'Über Fürstzenweikämpfe im Spätmittelalter', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, 49, 1967, pp. 135–63.

analysis of which would require several volumes on twenty or so pages inevitably produces banal statements. Five lines in a footnote on knighting and the role of the sword are not enough; that rulers held sumptuous feasts is again something we have known about for a long time.

To end my reflections on the young Slovak scholar's book I would like to say that despite some harsh words I do consider the book to be useful — despite its shortcomings — mainly because it fills a gap in research, because it puts the analysed material in order and — last but not least — because the author seeks to maintain distance from his subject matter.

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Henryk Szlajfer, *Współtwórcy atlantyckiego świata: Nowi chrześcijanie i Żydzi w gospodarce kolonialnej Ameryki Łacińskiej XVI–XVII wieku* [Co-creators of the Atlantic World: New Christians and Jews in the Colonial Economy of Latin America in the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Century], Warsaw: Scholar, 2018, 247 pp.

Henryk Szlajfer's book deals with a matter essential for understanding modernity, namely, the process of formation of the Atlantic world. It is shown through activities of two groups defined as new Christians (*conversos*) and Jews. In fact they were one community, that is, descendants of Sephardic Jews, both those who converted to Catholicism and those who remained in the faith of their forefathers. The author focuses particular attention on those coming from Portugal, defined as *La Nação*, that is, a nation connected by common origin. The book presents the picture of this group, its activities, growth and collapse in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, and, first of all, tries to describe the role which these people played in the emergence of the Atlantic world. It is also an attempt to sort out the centuries-long stereotypes or prejudices, which are also revealed in the historiography. The author carefully considers all aspects of the undertaken task, demystifying not only the current concepts, but also views strongly embedded in the historiography.

One should agree with the author that in the process of formation of the Atlantic world we can differentiate many other groups of entrepreneurs, financiers and merchants. One of them, close due to the genesis of its formation, was created by the milieu of Sephardic Jews who settled in the Republic of the Seven Provinces of the United Netherlands. Differentiating the two groups connected with the Iberian Peninsula is justified by their particular activity both in organizing of trade in slaves from Angola and in building the Brazilian sugar industry. However, Szlajfer's reasoning leaves no doubt: these two groups did not play a decisive role in creating the Atlantic world. Nevertheless, the author does not treat the place taken by them as the most important issue; he mainly wants to recon-

struct the process of their integration into the communities of America. He focuses his effort on the reconstruction of their involvement in the Brazilian, or, broadly speaking, American economy to construct a panorama of evolution of the group he is interested in. An evolution which led to its disappearance before the end of the eighteenth century. The author has performed this task in a talented way, showing great erudition and insight. And here one could end the review, stressing also the smooth narration and benefits that can flow from reading it.

To do so, however, would be unjust and unjustified laziness. There is also another reason for serious consideration of this book, since it is, regardless of the author's intents, a substantial contribution to the discussion of the process of formation of identity. And not only the Latin American one.

The book consists of thirteen chapters, including 'Wprowadzenie' (Introduction) and 'Zakończenie' (Conclusion), which are larger in scope than these titles formally suggest. One can even discuss with the author over whether the selected form of the ending is the most appropriate. I expected a summary of the issues signalled in the 'Introduction': how to explain this 'flash' of new Christians and Jews' activity in the sixteenth and the eighteenth century and the disappearance of this group in America in the eighteenth century. And what comes of it? Especially for the essential problem of co-creating the world. I also mean the question about connection between identity changes and formation of the world, since when the Atlantic world had already been formed, *La Nação*, so closely linked with this formation, ceased to exist. All this is presented in detail and interpreted in a convincing way, but such a short summary would be very useful, especially if the author had dealt with the problem of shaping the sense of community and reaction to the disintegration process. Such conclusions would have been invaluable for those interested in the problem of the defence of identity and the search for a new one.

It is worth realizing that Henryk Szlajfer decided to deal with a giant subject, since if we want to specify the share of a certain group's participation in creation of the Atlantic world, we must have a clear vision of the process of emergence of this reality. And not only in its economic dimension. We speak about Spanish America, from Florida to Buenos Aires, about Brazil and its borderlands, about the Caribbean and even about European possessions at the north of the continent. We also mean the Atlantic Ocean and the problem of trade, including ores and goods transfer, and, first of all, deliveries of African labour. So we cannot avoid speaking about Portugal's African possessions, mainly about Angola and European competition for these regions. This faced the author with serious problems. The first one is familiarization with a massive literature, and the second — constructing reasoning in a way that allows the reader to follow the author's thought. The second one is, as we know, the major challenge.

This explains why the author used secondary literature and printed primary sources. Archival research in this respect would take many years. And one cannot be certain whether access to new archival materials would bring any important

findings. Szlajfer looks for synthesis and — it should be stressed — does it with gusto. One can feel that this method of work suits him very much. I mean also a precise enrichment of narration with footnotes referring to the literature. The bibliography fills thirty six pages and is complete. An exception is the absence of readings from the circle of Walter Mignolo and Enrique Dussel, that is the so called de-colonial trend. It is *nota bene* presented in Filip Kubiaczyk's monograph *Nowoczesność, kolonialność i tożsamość: perspektywa latynoamerykańska*, Poznań, 2013 (Modernity, Coloniality and Identity: The Latin American Perspective). Studies on this academic formation relate in fact to a different period and even different problems, but revisionists' approach seems worth taking into account, also within the scope of research undertaken by Henryk Szlajfer. Anyway, undertaking a task planned as a synthesis the author had the right to rely on the existing literature. And I want to add that his commentaries to the old and newer positions are often juicy and one reads them with satisfaction.

This quality is not very frequent — Szlajfer has thought over his readings very thoroughly, and when he writes about them, his perception is often new and thought-provoking.

The Table of Contents reflects very well the content of the volume and the author's way of thinking. The Introduction is a perfect outline of the problem, that is, the role of the studied group in a broadly understood genesis of America and the drama of its confrontation with Holy Inquisition persecutions, until its ultimate dispersal in colonial societies in the eighteenth century. The first chapters introduce us to the subject: its terminology and differentiation, presenting the specific position of 'the Portuguese', the debate with opinions on the role of Jews, including the theses of Werner Sombart. In Chapter 4 we have a fine presentation of the problem of new Christians as a group being of key importance in the development of trade in African slaves. I believe that Szlajfer managed to sort out contradictions accompanying *conversos* from the time they appeared until today. These contradictions were not limited to the fact that new Christians considered themselves full-fledged Catholics, whereas old Christians continued to suspect them of Judaizing. I consider the reasoning presenting complex motivations of activities taken toward this group and equally complicated defence actions to be an example of a model interpretation of a very complex problem.

The next six chapters, over one third of the book, bring a very detailed presentation of the problems of trade and production connected with the Iberians' Atlantic. With the appearance of mass production of sugar in Brazil, the need to provide labour became urgent, so consequently a large-scale trade in slaves had to be organized. The role of new Christians is presented here in a very detailed way, emphasizing the specifics of economic activities of *conversos*. Szlajfer showed how *La Nação*, the new and old Christians, with participation of Amsterdam Jews connected the Old and the New World with a network of economic activity (Chapters 7 and 10. This is a very precise analysis.

Chapter 11 leads us out of Atlantic and shows different fates of *conversos* in Spanish America. This chapter is very useful for a better understanding of the

genesis and consequences of persecutions of new Christians by the Holy Inquisition. The final chapter titled '*Tempo dos flamengos — nowi Żydzi w nowej Holandii*' (*Tempo dos flamengos — New Jews in the New Netherlands*) is a splendid summary of reflections on the changes of Jews' identity in the modern epoch. As I have already mentioned, this chapter is inevitable for closing the construction of the book, not for summing up the whole of it. Szlajfer links the struggle for establishing Dutch estates in Brazil with the concurrent activity of the local *conversos* and Sephardic Jews from Amsterdam. He also discusses attempts to establish a Portugal trade company.

We have received a book which is important and worth recommendation. We should thank the author for dealing with an important subject and congratulate him for the manner of his performance.

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Martin Faber, *Sarmatismus: Die politische Ideologie des polnischen Adels im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* [The Sarmatism: The Political Ideology of the Polish Nobility in the 16th and 17th Centuries], Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz Verlag, 2018, 525 pp., Deutsches Historisches Institut Warschau, Quellen und Studien, vol. 35

The book under review, published as part of a series of studies and sources of the German Historical Institute in Warsaw, is a result of research carried out over many years. Its author, a graduate of the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, where he obtained a doctoral degree under Wolfgang Reinhard and where he started working in 2002, began after his doctorate to carry out research into the history of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the 'Commonwealth of Nobles'. Numerous study visits to Poland enabled him to collect relevant source material, which he used in his thesis that became the basis of his post-doctoral degree (*habilitation*) granted in 2013.

I should start presenting the book from its title. It announces an analysis of the political ideology of the Polish nobility in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but this is only partially confirmed by the book's contents. Although in the first chapter ('Zur Ausgangslage') the author examines the origins of Sarmatism in the first half of the sixteenth century, in general his analysis focuses on the ideology of the nobility in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between the 1569 Union of Lublin and the late seventeenth century. What can be regarded as problematic is his reduction of the term 'Sarmatism' to the political ideology of the nobility and the fact that he associates it with the Polish (or Polonized) nobility (*szlachta*). In the Polish research tradition the term has a broader meaning encompassing phenomena associated with culture, art and customs. Similar reservations are provoked by the fact that the term is linked to the Polish nobility. After all, it



was an idea developed and adopted in the sixteenth century by a society that was still very diverse (in terms of ethnicity, language, religion and culture). It seems that it was only in the seventeenth century that the domination (not only among the nobles) of cultural models described as Sarmatism and of its political ideology accelerated the uniformization, primarily with regard to customs, of the nobility, as well as its Polonization.

The structure of the book seems clear. It is divided into six chapters and these in turn into subchapters, in which the author discusses selected aspects of the ideology of the nobility. Whenever possible and necessary chronological order is maintained, although essentially the structure of the book is based on specific topics. The foreword ('Vorwort') is followed by an extensive introduction ('Einleitung'), in which the author presents the assumptions of his study and tries to explain why the meaning of the term Sarmatism is limited to the sphere of ideology. Chapter 2 ('Zur Ausgangslage') focuses on a description of the nobility as an estate in Poland-Lithuania and on the beginnings of the political ideology of Sarmatism. Chapter 3 ('Die Entstehung der sarmatischen Ideologie') is devoted not so much to the formation of the nobility's ideology, but rather its functioning in the first period examined in detail by the author and encompassing the first two interregna, the evolution of the canon of the ideology of liberty in 1576–1606 as well as the Sandomierz rebellion (Zbrzydowski's rebellion) described here as 'Der sarmatische Aufstand'.

Of key importance is Chapter 4 ('Inhalt der Ideologie'), which features a description of the most important — according to Martin Faber — characteristics of the ideology of the nobility. It encompassed a sense of community as an estate, immanent conservatism, the limited role of royal power, justification of the leading role of the nobility by its military merits, finally — idealization of the nobility as knights and farmers. At the end two subchapters present the most important arguments used in the defence of Sarmatism thus defined against internal and external criticism.

Chapter 5 ('Die Entwicklung der Ideologie bis zum Ende des 17. Jahrhunderts') is devoted to the transformation of the political ideology of the nobility in the seventeenth century, that is from the end of the Sandomierz rebellion to the death of King John III Sobieski. Finally, in the last chapter ('Schlusswort') the author offers a few pages of a summary and conclusions. The book, published in the series' traditional hard green cover, contains a list of abbreviations, extensive bibliography of sources and literature as well as an index of names.

Worthy of note is the long list of sources and studies, mainly by Polish historians, used by the author. The contents of the book, above all its numerous extensive, sometimes digressive, footnotes, confirm that Martin Faber is familiar with the Polish research into and discussions about various interpretations of the phenomenon described as Sarmatism. Thus his decision to limit himself to political ideology was a conscious choice. Faber's analyses and conclusions are based primarily on printed sources, both those from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as well as source editions. In his book he uses no fewer

than 297 printed texts and collections of texts. The number does not fully convey the scope of his research — the bibliography features very varied items, varied also in terms of their volume. Thus we have here collections of official documents (including *Volumina constitutionum* and *Volumina legum*), parliamentary diaries, *lauda* and local assembly instructions, legal and political treatises, journalistic writings, literature (*belles-lettres* and popular literature) as well as various egodocuments. The author's research encompassed a vast and varied collection of sources. We should, therefore, examine its results.

Unsurprisingly, the introductory chapters are largely based on the literature on the subject. In Chapter 2 Faber describes the nobility in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth ('Die Protagonisten') and then goes on to explain the origins of the nobles' political ideology ('Freiheit und Mischverfassung'), the foundations of which were freedom of the members of the nobility and a mixed system of government. Issues like the formation, composition and various elements of the structure of the nobility as an estate have been analysed in Polish historiography many times and from various perspectives. The sixteenth-century concept of freedom-based mixed system of government and its ideologists (Jakub Przyłuski, Stanisław Orzechowski, Wawrzyniec Goślicki and others) are also some of the traditional themes of Polish historiography and Martin Faber's findings could not have contributed anything new.

Similarly, there is a vast literature on the question tackled in the third chapter, devoted to the emergence of the ideological canon of Sarmatism in 1572–1608. The first two interregna (subchapter 'Von der Offensive zur Defensive'), the reign of Stephen Báthory and the first twenty years of Sigismund III's rule ('Die größte Freiheit der Welt'), and, in particular, the Sandomierz rebellion ('Der sarmatische Aufstand') are those stages in the development of the ideology of the nobility for which a novel interpretation in the light of the existing findings in the literature seems a difficult task. Suffice it to mention Edward Opaliński's fundamental study *Kultura polityczna szlachty polskiej w latach 1587–1652: System parlamentarny a społeczeństwo obywatelskie* (Warsaw, 1995) as well as other studies by the same author.

Real disappointment, however, comes with Chapter 4. All the threads of the main part of the book mentioned above are elements recurring almost *ad nauseam* in publications by historians and historians of literature studying Polish culture and literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. We might have hoped that Martin Faber would find other elements constitutive of the nobles' political ideology and would go beyond frequently analysed themes. Yet despite his rather harsh criticism of the views of earlier scholars tackling the subject matter in question ('Ratlosigkeit der Historiker', pp. 160–62), we find nothing new in Faber's own conclusions. Neither his discussion of the social determinants of the ideology of Sarmatism ('Symbiose'), in which Faber tackles the problem of the relations between the nobility's ideal of equality and the oligarchic practices of magnates; nor his analysis of the nobility's conservatism ('Omnis novitas nociva'), where we find reflections on the practice of the

ideology of freedom or the *liberum veto* principle; nor his analysis of the role of royal power in the ideology of the nobility ('Der Unentbehrliche') has brought about a revision of the earlier findings. Similarly disappointing are Faber's reflections on the nobility's legitimization of its political claims to domination by references to the military merits of its Sarmatian ancestors — who had apparently won their right to freedom in some distant past ('Der Szlachcic als Ritter') — and on the popularization of the ideal image of a Sarmatian nobleman as a Polish-Lithuanian Cincinnatus, a knight and a farmer in one. Likewise, in the last subchapters of this part of the book ('Gute Gesetze, schlechte Sitten' and 'Polonia defensa'), the author fails to convincingly go beyond the findings of his predecessors.

Despite the fact that on p. 159 Faber firmly says that with the end of the Sandomierz rebellion of 1608 'war die sarmatische Ideologie nicht nur etabliert, sondern auch die Phase ihrer Entstehung im Wesentlichen abgeschlossen,' his reflection is continued in Chapter 5, in which, however, he speaks of the development (*die Entwicklung*) of the ideology of Sarmatism in the seventeenth century. In spite of the evident contradiction between the thesis concerning the end of the formation of the nobility's political ideology and the title of Chapter 5, which speaks about its development, it is hard to blame Martin Faber for tackling the period after 1608, especially the second half of the seventeenth century. After all, it was precisely in that period that growing xenophobia, Catholic proselytizing, disappearance of tolerant tendencies as well as Catholic providentialism — emerging with the ideology of the bulwark and evolving towards Messianism — became important components of the ideology of the nobility.

A discussion of the functioning of this ideology in 1608–48 ('Ruhe vor der Sturm') and during the crisis of the Polish-Lithuanian state in 1648–69 ('Die Erfahrung des Überlebens') is followed by two subchapters, in which the 'Sarmatian king' Michael Wiśniowiecki ('Der sarmatische König') is contrasted with John III Sobieski, 'Der unsarmatische König'. Despite a surprisingly inaccurate assessment of the current state of research into the reign of Michał Wiśniowiecki — which may have resulted from negligence in the editing of the final version of the book in March 2018 (p. 391) — the author's description of the reign is satisfactory.

The same goes for his description of John III's Sobieski's rule, which is regarded as the apogee of Sarmatism in our historiography (p. 450). In defining Sobieski as an 'un-Sarmatian king' Faber develops some earlier findings which slightly modified the traditional image of Sobieski as the ideal 'Polish Sarmatian'. Starting with the concept of 'enlightened Sarmatism' as a tendency characteristic of the king and his milieu, Martin Faber convincingly argues that the 'Sarmatian' background was a conscious creation of an image most likely aimed at erasing the memory of the years when Jan Sobieski, Grand Hetman of the Crown at the time conspiring with France, had headed the opposition against Michael Wiśniowiecki, the 'king who came from the nobility'. The book under review ends with a brief conclusion, in which the author sums up his analysis.

Ending this brief discussion of Martin Faber's substantial study, I have to say, somewhat disappointingly, that it contributes little to our knowledge of the political ideology of the nobility in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, defined here as Sarmatism. Despite the author's references to the methods used by new intellectual historians, we do not find in the book much that is new in comparison with the findings of Faber's predecessors. Nor can we point to many serious errors, with the exception perhaps of the author's too frequent references to opinions from the Enlightenment period, in which Sarmatism appeared as a *bête noire* — 'Gothic barbarity'. The author even seems to forget sometimes that the right point of reference for his analyses should be the views of contemporary historians, so familiar to him, and not criticism of Sarmatism by enlightened reformers from the second half of the eighteenth century.

Thus the overall assessment of the book formulated from the point of view of a Polish reader is not very positive. The book describes, sums up and provides few modifications of the findings of Faber's predecessors and so Polish historians will not benefit much from reading it. I hope that at least German readers, especially those not familiar with the Polish historical literature, will be able to expand their knowledge of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the 'Commonwealth of the nobles', and the most important characteristics of its dominant political ideology in the seventeenth century.

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Maria Cieřła, *Kupcy, arendarze, rzemieřlnicy: Różnorodność zawodowa Żydów w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w XVII i XVIII w.* [Merchants, Leaseholders and Craftsmen: Professional Diversity of Jews in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries], Warsaw: Instytut Historii PAN, 2018, 323 pp.

This book is a welcome instalment in the larger project of distinguishing the history of the *Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie* (Grand Duchy of Lithuania) from that of the *Korona Królestwa Polskiego* (Korona — Crown Poland) when framing the narrative of the confederation between the two, the *Rzeczpospolita Obojga Narodów* (Commonwealth of the Two Nations or Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). In this case the subject is the economic history of the Jews in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Maria Cieřła has admirably managed to craft a readable survey of a broad subject that has the detail and depth of a monograph. In five chapters she treats the legal framework of Jewish economic endeavour in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, leaseholding in its multiple forms, commerce at all levels, artisanry and secondary areas (service occupations, agriculture and moneylending). Cieřła draws on a plethora of material, beginning with the Lithuanian *Metrica* and a treasure

chest of royal decrees, privileges, legislation and other documents concerning the Jews; through magnate archives including correspondence, petitions, contracts, declarations, inventories, account books; and municipal acts from both royal (especially Vilna (Vilnius)) and private (especially Śluck (Slutsk)) towns. There is some reference to sources that originated from within the Jewish community, based, mainly, on secondary works. The emphasis is, however, on what Cieřła terms an *external* view which, in her expert hands, the non-Jewish documents yield. A thorough analysis of the Jewish sources, and their potential to shape the portrayal, remains a desideratum.

Cieřła skillfully integrates previous scholarship on the subject beginning with Bierszadzski in the nineteenth century and Mark Wischnitzer and Israel Sosis in the early twentieth, up to the most recent research from Israel, the USA, Germany, Poland and Lithuania. She often confirms and enriches what her predecessors had to say, but does not hesitate to challenge their conclusions when appropriate. For example, she reinforces Wischnitzer's observation that Jewish artisan guilds developed more slowly in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania than in the Crown (p. 236). However, Cieřła points out his error in believing there were Jewish tailors who specialized in serving Christian customers (p. 230). She finds Horn grossly underestimated the number of Jewish artisan guilds (p. 237), while she casts doubt on Judith Kalik's assertion that Jewish barbers functioned as village doctors (p. 225).

Cieřła's hunt for differences between Jewish economic activity in the Grand Duchy, as compared with the Crown, turns up less than might be expected. Conversely, she has made new discoveries that probably apply to the Crown no less than Lithuania. It is no surprise, for example, to read about the economic, political and social importance to both sides of the nexus between the Jews and the *szlachta*; and especially between the Jews and the magnates. This has been thoroughly documented for the Crown and Teller arrived at mostly parallel conclusions in his studies of the Radziwiłł estates in Lithuania. On this topic, Cieřła adds the important observation that these connections were not based exclusively on utilitarian considerations. Long-standing personal relationships with both lords and their administrators built up trust among the parties (pp. 98, 116, 146). This undoubtedly was as true in the Crown as it was in the Grand Duchy.

In terms of Jewry law, Cieřła makes an important contribution by clearly showing the opposing tendencies of privileges to Jewish communities granted by the King and magnates, as against the local agreements negotiated between Jews and the municipalities where they lived. The privileges were intended, *grosso modo*, to grant the Jews religious freedom and economic opportunity so that they might flourish and bring material benefit to the rulers. The local pacts were designed to restrict Jewish presence and economic activity so that the Jews impinged as minimally as possible on the lives of the other townspeople.

What Cieřła establishes in the first chapter is that the nature of the Jewry legislation, its enforcement and the actual situation of the Jews in any given town were all directly related to the power or weakness of the burgher class in that locality. This challenges the conventional wisdom that the Jews' circumstances

were determined by the type of ruler of the place they lived (King or noble) and, generally speaking, private towns were more salutary for them than royal ones. For Cieřła that distinction is overridden by the strength of the burghers on a scale ranging from docility to aggressiveness, which considerably affected the ruler's Jewish policies (pp. 54–57).

The next chapter sets out several assertions with regard to *arenda*, the leasing of concessions and incomes. Cieřła demonstrates that in Lithuania Jews dominated *arenda* leases of all types (except for the leasing of agricultural *latifundia*). In addition, leasing — from the general *arenda* of the incomes of an entire town down to the sub-lease on one tavern or one mill — was the most important economic enterprise for the Lithuanian Jewish community. Affluent arrendators enjoyed high social status and composed a significant component of the communal elite.

Cieřła shows that in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, at least, *arenda* leases typically stayed with the same lessee long-term and even might pass to his heirs. This, despite the Jewish community's attempts to prevent monopolization on her of leases, through the institution of *hazakah* (licensing of bidding on a lease).

It is in connection with *arenda* that one of the biggest differences between the Crown and the Grand Duchy is manifest. In Crown Poland Jews were prohibited from bidding on state incomes like sales and excise taxes, or customs duties (pp. 59–61). In Lithuania they held more of these state leases than Christians did (pp. 87, 124–32). Of course, the administration of *arenda* leases in the the Grand Duchy of Lithuania engendered conflict, no less than in Crown Poland. Potentially there could be conflict with those obligated to pay the arrendator money due from the tax, or the right or the income he was leasing; conflict with town authorities who resented not having control over these monies; conflict with royal or magnate officials; conflict with the Jewish community which sought to break monopolies and long-held concessions; or with other Jews who wanted to compete for some lease.

Commerce was the next most important Jewish economic pursuit. In fact, Cieřła stresses that Jews — from long-distance, large-scale merchants, to store-keepers, standholders, middlemen of all types and peddlers — dominated local commerce in Lithuanian cities, towns and villages (pp. 148, 151–52, 211). Jews made sure to travel to commercial fairs throughout Poland-Lithuania in search of low prices and a better selection of merchandise. In general, Jewish traders offered a wide variety of staple and luxury products to city and town populations, while Jewish peddlers kept villagers supplied with goods they could not produce themselves. Economic contraction in the eighteenth century meant that polarization of the commercial class sharpened, with the lower ranks of jobbers and simple traders swelling while the numbers of middle-scale merchants and storeowners declined (p. 156).

International and wholesale trade was controlled mainly by Christians. However, backed largely by loans and sponsorship (*protekcja*) of magnates,

Jews progressively made inroads and by the mid-eighteenth century Jews were responsible for some thirty per cent of the merchandise imported into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Large scale Jewish merchants participated in the international trade traveling as far west as Breslau (Wrocław) and Leipzig. They even managed occasionally to penetrate into *Judenrein* Russia under the cover of magnate *protekcja* or by employing non-Jewish agents (pp. 159–82).

In Chapter 4, Cieśla indicates that another significant difference between the Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was in the sphere of crafts. To the west and south, a relatively large number of Jews engaged in a rather broad spectrum of crafts. In Lithuania Jewish artisans were proportionally fewer. They did practise a variety of crafts (although many fewer than Christians did), but they concentrated in three areas: butchering, tailoring and baking. All of these were connected to Jewish ritual requirements with respect to diet and clothing, which precluded Jews patronizing Christians who worked in these fields. Jewish barbers and goldsmiths were considered to be the elite of the Jewish artisan class (p. 228). They and tailors, artists and musicians were the most likely among Jews to have Christian customers, especially nobles (pp. 231–36).

Cieśla explores the Lithuanian development of Jewish craft guilds (occurring later and less intensively than in Crown Poland). There is plentiful detail about their organization, requirements and relationship to Christian guilds. Sometimes Jewish artisans were forced to make payments to Christian guilds even though they could not be members; or the Jewish guild might be a separate sub-group of the Christian one (pp. 245–47). Mostly, however, they were autonomous.

Some Jews were employed in what might be termed communal civil service jobs (rabbis and other religious functionaries, scribes, bailiffs, ritual slaughterers, bathhouse attendants, and so on); the most common of which was teacher (pp. 255–59). Another common Jewish occupation was wagoner (p. 260). Jews did engage in ancillary small-scale ‘agriculture’ (tending to small plots and a few domestic animals) (pp. 262–65).

By the mid-seventeenth century both Polish and Lithuanian Jews had long ago abandoned money-lending as a main occupation. Both the Jewish community as an entity and individuals within it were decidedly more debtors than creditors. However, petty money-lending on pawns continued as a sideline (p. 265).

Cieśla expends abundant energy investigating the degree of cooperation between Jews and Christians in the various economic spheres. Her implied conclusion: very little. *Arendas*, commercial businesses and workshops were predominantly family affairs with various family members working together as a team. Christians were employed in minor roles. While Jewish merchants had many Christian customers; they, and arrendators, rarely had Christian partners. It was only the international Jewish merchants who engaged with Christian merchants when doing business at fairs far from home. This disassociation laid the foundation for many rivalries and conflicts which Cieśla analyses with care.

Speaking of the family as an economic team, Cieśla pioneers in delineating Jewish women’s efforts as team members. In addition to domestic duties,



women specialized in running arenda taverns, ‘manning’ stores and stands, peddling, performing artisan tasks and lending money. Women often attended fairs with husbands, fathers or brothers; sometimes, like their brothers, so as to find a marriage match. It is noteworthy that Cieřła makes no mention of the custom of *eshet hayil*, a woman who served as the main breadwinner of her family so that her husband could be a full-time scholar. This omission reflects the reality that *eshet hayil* was actually a marginal practice in the period Cieřła portrays.

Overall, Cieřła asserts that the general success of Jewish economic activity in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was due to three facets of Jewish business behaviour: flexibility, multi-functionality and mobility. As a rule, Jews were not tied to any one occupation. Arenda leasing might be connected with both commercial pursuits and artisanry. Alternatively, an arrendator this year might become a merchant next year. Either husband or wife might be capable of operating the arenda, running the store or negotiating at the fair. Jews were apt to move to a new town or region for economic betterment and Jewish merchants tended to travel long distances to expand product lines and improve profit margins. This analysis dovetails with David. B. Ruderman’s characterization of what typified Jews throughout the world in the early modern period (*Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History*, Princeton, 2010).

Throughout her book, Cieřła notes over and over again that sources are lacking for detailing this or that topic she is about to tackle. One wonders how, then, she has managed to create such a well-rounded, seemingly comprehensive and — yes — detailed account of her subject. She has woven together myriad sources, analysed and interpreted them, to create a work of scholarship that should be standard reading for anyone engaged with Polish, Lithuanian, Jewish and, indeed, European history.

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Piotr Głuszkowski, *Barwy polskořci, czyli życie burzliwe Tadeusza Bułharyna* [Colours of Polish Character, or Turbulent Life of Tadeusz Bułharyn] Cracow: Towarzystwo Autorów i Wydawców Prac Naukowych Universitas, 2018, 445 pp., Biblioteka Literatury Pogranicza, vol. 26

The reviewed work is a biography of Tadeusz Bułharyn (1789–1859), a publisher and editor of newspapers in St Petersburg, a popular novelist and columnist writing in Russian. This Petersburg Pole is well known in the history of Russian culture of that period, and has often appeared in the works on the leading Russian writers — Aleksandr Pushkin, Nikolai Gogol’, Aleksandr Griboedov or Petr Viazemskii. Bułharyn was usually a negative background for them, a person embodying servility toward rulers and literary cynicism. His position in the history of Russian culture was to a large degree defined by the significance of

persons who were in personal or literary dispute with him. Recently this approach has changed; Bułharyn's work and activity have become a subject of numerous studies in Russia. The author of the most important of them is Abram Rejtlat, who published, among other things, a substantive collection of sources on Bułharyn's collaboration with the central police institution — the III Department of the Personal Chancellery of the Emperor. Piotr Głuszkowski's book, although it covers the whole biography of Bułharyn, is in the author's intention an attempt to look at him from a Polish perspective and to expose Polish threads in his life.

Bułharyn's biographers must confront themselves with numerous myths, which Bułharyn created himself and which were created about him. The protagonist of the book had reasons to camouflage certain elements of his life. In childhood he was in the St Petersburg cadet school, next he became a brave officer of the Russian army, but in 1811 he joined the French army in which he participated in the war of 1812. He admitted that he took part in this war, but — Głuszkowski suspects — he did not disclose that he had been in Moscow during its seizure and fire. Other biographical fiction was linked with his literary work of a strongly autobiographical character. On the other hand, the increasing aversion of the Russian intellectual elites toward him fostered the emergence of nasty gossips about him. The author of the book managed to sort out some of these myths and biographical riddles; others (such as Bułharyn's participation in the Spanish war) will wait for future researchers.

The book shows in an interesting way Bułharyn's great Petersburg successes as an editor of several magazines and newspapers (mainly the *Severnaia pchela* [Northern Bee] daily) and as a novelist, the author of a very popular novel *Ivan Vyzhigin*. But this was accompanied by the gradual increase of controversies and aversion towards him. Consequently, he was the subject of numerous epigrams and more or less camouflaged attacks in the press. He was accused of participation in the war of 1812 on the side of the enemy. His unclear attitude to the Decembrists also caused hostility. Bułharyn was a friend of the leading representatives of this movement, he probably had known about the action they prepared, but in the most important moment he remained neutral. The fact that he soon initiated collaboration with the secret police besmirched his earlier attitude. Bułharyn's press successes were controversial, since they were partly the result of the protection of rulers, as well as ruthlessly counteracting the competition. The aversion of the Russian intellectual elites to Bułharyn also resulted from changes in culture, including changes of literary tastes — one should especially mention the mutual antipathy between him and Gogol' and the whole so called 'natural school'. Separate chapters of the book are focused on Bułharyn's relations with Gogol' and Pushkin.

Głuszkowski shows that Bułharyn, as a Pole writing in Russian, was in fact approved by Polish intellectual elites before 1831. He was in good contact with Adam Mickiewicz, who to a large extent owed to him permission to leave Russia. The November Uprising was a radical limit. Bułharyn, as the editor of a St Petersburg

newspaper, could not avoid presenting the official line of Russian rulers toward the uprising, although Głuszkowski mentions that articles of *Severnaia pchela* differed from other Russian papers by their more gentle tone. The milieu in which Bułharyn functioned in Russia did not matter to Polish public opinion (especially in the Congress Kingdom of Poland — Russian partition) before 1831. After the uprising the situation changed. For example, we find characteristic mentions in the book about his warm correspondence with a colleague from cadet school Andrei Storozhenko, that is, the notorious president of the Investigation Committee in Warsaw.

I believe that the issue of Bułharyn's collaboration with the III Department until 1831 requires an analysis. The author is correct when he mentions that Bułharyn was not an ordinary agent, and he agrees with Rejtblatt that we should rather speak about the status of a consultant. But it seems to me that more important than determining the nature of Bułharyn's collaboration with the III Department is the problem of the role which this institution, especially its head, General Alexander von Benckendorff, played in the Polish affairs.<sup>1</sup> These issues are not analysed deeply but we may probably state that Benckendorff was the main advisor of Nicholas I regarding the Congress Kingdom of Poland. It mainly related to the limitation of the role of the Grand Duke Constantine in Congress Poland, and in a longer perspective removing him from Warsaw. A secondary issue was ridding Congress Poland of Nikolai Novosil'tsev, who after Alexander's I death was in fact an advisor of the Grand Duke and not a direct representative of the emperor. Bułharyn's memorials filed with the III Department were compatible with these political plans of Nicholas I. Bułharyn wrote both about Congress Poland and the Polish governorates of the Empire (due to the role played there by Constantine and Novosil'tsev). Expectations of recipients, including the emperor, facilitated his very critical opinions on Novosil'tsev's activity in Vilna (Vilnius). In this context, cooperation with the III Department did not have to be very difficult for Bułharyn due to his feeling that his advice would promote observance of the Constitution and the liberalization of the rulers' policy toward Poles. One must mention, though, that he used these contacts to combat the press competition.

The central question of the book is the problem of Bułharyn's national identification — how he himself presented his identity and how he was defined by other people, the Russians and Poles. The Russians perceived him as a Pole. For majority of Poles he was after 1831 a renegade, a man who purposefully denied his Polish identity. But Poles living in St Petersburg evaluated him in a different way and he was still a member of the local Polish milieu. The author shows these different perceptions of 'his' protagonist: the emigration, Warsaw, 'Lithuanian' and St Petersburg.

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<sup>1</sup> See: Wacław Tokarz, *Sprzysiężenie Wysockiego i noc listopadowa*, ed. Andrzej Zahorski, Warsaw, 1980, pp. 71–72.

Bułharyn was of the opinion that Poles, just like the Baltic Germans, should participate in the life of Russia. The case of the Baltic Germans was well known to him as since 1828 he had had a property near Dorpat (Tartu). His views did not leave room for any independence aspirations, but he did not think about the need to renounce Polish culture or history. I believe that it would be interesting to compare Bułharyn with Henryk Rzewuski, who acted at the same time and had similar opinions and views. It seems that Rzewuski to a greater extent assumed Poles' assimilation into Russian culture. Of course they were in different situations — Bułharyn who wrote in Russian and played an important role in Russian literary work could not avoid confronting his ideas with the opinions of Russian elites. Głuszkowski's book shows how Bułharyn's concepts with time became less and less realistic and collided with the ideology of 'official nationality' formulated by Sergei Uvarov (on the orders of Nicholas I). Bułharyn, while fully supporting one element of this ideology (tsarist autocracy), tried to redefine the other two: to change Orthodox religion to Christianity, and to see nationality as not relating exclusively to ethnic Russians.

Summing up, the book is an interesting voice in the discussion on the complex national identities of Poles in the first half of the nineteenth century. It is a part of research on national awareness and norms of conduct in the situations of political choice.

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*(Translated by Anna Kijak)*