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We should add that contrasting the biologicistic system with the mechanistic one without the attributes of the time frames and applying it to the international relations seems to be very close to the classic opposition between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*.<sup>94</sup> It is derived sometimes from the strong conflict between the Sophists and Plato, close to the conflict of 18<sup>th</sup>-century liberalism (John Locke) with traditionalism and of modern liberalism (John Rawls) with communitarianism.<sup>95</sup> It would exceed the scope of the present study, however, to expand on these reflections.

4. Above, the discussion has been presented which took place in 1576-1577 between the king and the nobility supporting him on the one side, and the burghers from Danzig on the other. Besides many topics which were omitted during the preparations for the article, the polemic brought up the problems of political system of the Commonwealth and relationship between the city and the state. An important role in this conflict was played by the doctrine of the right of resistance to power which was in the background of the debate, and the question of origin of the royal power. And although both sides agreed in the latter question and maintained that the king's power came from the contract, it did not exclude the conviction of its divine nature. To defend themselves against an accusation of rebellion, they had to seek in other moral duties, for example toward their descendants, thus refuting a charge of being concerned for their own private advantage.

At the same time it turned out that the Danzigers used a different interpretation of the state than the royal party. The Commonwealth, according to them, was close to the federalist Reich and it may be possible to demonstrate that they used arguments of the towns of Western Pomeranian states, which in their conflicts with rulers appealed to the Supreme Court of the Reich (*Reichskammergericht*), maintaining that they were subordinate to the emperor and the jurisdiction of the Reich. When, after Bogusław X's death, the ducal throne was taken over by his sons George I and Barnim XI, a conflict erupted between the dukes and

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93 Ibid., I. G 1v.

94 F. Tönnies, *Wspólnota i stowarzyszenie. Rozprawa o komunizmie i socjalizmie jako empirycznych formach kultury*, Warsaw, 1988.

95 Chmielewski, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

towns over the order of confirmation of privileges and paying homage. The conflict lasted for two years.<sup>96</sup> Probably, it is possible to prove that the direct subjection to the ruler, as claimed by Danzig, was an attempt to gain a similar position to that of other towns of the Reich (*Reichstädte*), directly subordinated to the emperor.

All this indicates only that it is not easy to answer unambiguously the question what was the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Commonwealth. It certainly was not an anomaly, which has already been proven by Adam Manikowski and Andrzej Wyczański. The above-proposed attempt at interpretation of a public discussion proves, however, that also the contemporary people understood the nature of the 16<sup>th</sup>-century state in many different ways. In addition, the skilful selection of arguments and great ease in constructing them is the evidence of high political culture of both polemicising sides.

Translated by *Grażyna Waluga*

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96 M. Wehrmann, *Geschichte von Pommern*, vol. 1, Gotha, 1919, p. 22.