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Kierownik: prof. dr Grzegorz Leopold Seidler

Grzegorz Leopold SEIDLER, Jan MALARCZYK

**The Political Thought of Jagiellonian Poland**

**Myśl polityczna Polski Jagiellonów**

**Политическая мысль Польши Ягеллонов**

The aim of the present outline is a synthetic presentation of Polish political doctrines under Jagiellonian rule. In the history of this country it was a time of radical changes which can be compared — apart from their direction — to those which occurred after World War II.

To begin with, the geographic location of Poland was changing. Gradually, under the pressure of the Germans, the Poles were leaving the lands in the basin of the upper Oder retaining only the areas over the Warta river. At the same time there was a marked shifting of the eastern border which, at the time of the Jagiellonian monarchy, reached as far as the Dniester, the Dnieper, the Dvina and the Niemen, while the basin of the river Vistula became the centre of the country.

Owing to these vital territorial shifts the ethnic and religious composition of Poland was also changing. Until then Poland had been homogenous as far as nationality was concerned and almost wholly bound to the Roman Church, but as a result of the expansion eastward the country became multinational and nearly half of its population belonged to the Orthodox Church. The domes of Orthodox churches standing side by side with the spires of Catholic churches symbolized the eastward expansion and consequent religious conflicts. Towards the end of the sixteenth century Poland covered the area of about 800,000 square kilometres and had over seven and a half million population, out of which less than three million were living in the truly Polish lands that is in Greater Poland, Lesser Poland and Mazovia.

However, geographical, ethnic and religious changes were not the only ones that occurred at the time of the Jagiellonian monarchy. During this period, too, Poland acquired important economic status and became the granary of Europe as the consumption of grain increased rapidly. From the end of the fifteenth century and throughout the sixteenth the population in Western Europe was increasing steadily; about 1500 the population of the Empire was approximately twice the number that it had been in the eleventh century, i.e. it probably reached 12 million people, while towards the sixteenth century it went up to 20 million. The demand for agricultural products was increasing as were also the prices of those products, the more so that there was emigration from the country to towns. During the sixteenth century the prices of agricultural products, particularly of grain, went up in different European countries 150 to 200 per cent. No small role was played in this process by the influx of precious metals which were brought from America in such quantities that their amount trebled during the sixteenth century compared with the preceding century.

Owing to this high demand for agricultural products the Polish gentry were abandoning their military craft in order to cultivate the land. Manors, whose economy was based on the unpaid labour of the serfs treated like slaves, grew in size by legal means and illegal. The expansion eastward together with the exploitation of the peasants made it possible for the gentry to produce more grain and to export it. While towards the end of the fifteenth century (1492) 25,795 tons of grain were sent annually through Gdańsk, in the middle of the next century (1563) the quantity of grain exported by the same route went up to 171,366 tons annually<sup>1</sup>.

Seeking still greater gain the gentry were imposing economic and political restrictions on the Polish townspeople. They imposed price lists on towns and selfishly obtained for themselves exemption from duties on exported grain as well as a free import of luxury articles from abroad, thus undermining the economic position of the Polish towns. Political discrimination against townspeople took various forms: they were forbidden to buy land, barred from higher offices — both secular and ecclesiastical — they had no representatives in the Diet, finally, whole municipal districts were deprived of local government. Half a million of the gentry — for such was their number in the middle of the sixteenth century — dominated the other estates making Poland their own country.

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<sup>1</sup> A. Zabko-Potopowicz: *Handel zbożem w Polsce w XVI wieku*, „*Ekonomista*”, Autumn 1952, p. 138.

The conflicts between the gentry of the middle level and the aristocracy determined the political line until the time when the magnates seized the whole power. For, notwithstanding the oft repeated declaration of equality among members of the gentry, the economic differences within the class increased steadily. The accumulating of more and more land in the hands of aristocracy went on at the expense of crown property and also as a consequence of the expansion into the Ukraine; it resulted in the rise of immense fortunes. Already towards the end of the sixteenth century the lands of the magnates were transformed more and more into independent economic and political districts. A great feudal lord had absolute power over the people living on his land; he established private towns, built fortresses, had his own administration and his own army, he sometimes even regulated his politics independently of the country's interest. This increasing independence of some powerful nobles was to transform Poland in the future into a sort of federation of magnates' states, each with absolute rule within and with a weak rule of the king at the top.

But before this aristocratic rule came to prevail, the gentry-dominated Poland had a golden age under the reign of the last Jagiellonians.

The gentry were at that time changing their whole way of living, their manners, costume, houses and feeding habits, but above all they began to educate themselves, both in the country and abroad. This trend towards education is particularly observable in the first six decades of the sixteenth century. That time was also one of great national creativity; masterpieces of literature came to be written in the vernacular; Polish political thought aroused respect throughout Europe, and the social ideas of the Polish Brethren (the Arians) were admired for decades by the finest minds.

Every greatness, however, has its own petty elements. In the case of Polish history they were to prove fatal. The exclusiveness of the gentry, their isolation from the rest of society, depraved their character and led to negative results in economic and political life. Polish trade and commerce were paralysed by the privileges of the gentry and could not provide a basis for the growth of a strong middle class. Thus the king had no ally except the gentry, and when he was not able to make use of the antagonism between the gentry and the nobility, he had to give in wholly to the oligarchy of the feudal lords.

The feeling of superiority that prevailed among the gentry made them scorn the other estates and hold all work in contempt; they were vain and convinced — without any ground — that their system of

government was ideal and this attitude resulted in a complete loss of the sense of reality.

The Jagiellonian monarchy has been the subject of many studies, monographic or dealing with particular aspects of the times. The present outline will not bring to light any new facts, nor will it attempt to throw new light on the facts already known; its aim is to focus attention on some of the problems that shaped the politics of the period and were the source of political ideas. Since a certain simplification is unavoidable in any synthesis and classification, the epoch has been divided here into three periods according to the basic problems which were different in different periods.

The first of the periods covers the times of Władysław Jagiello (1386—1434); its characteristic feature is the shifting of Polish political interest eastward. The essential problem of the time was determining the attitude of the Polish Catholic Church to the members of the Greek Orthodox Church, the heathens and the Teutonic Knights.

The reign of the second generation of the Jagiellonians and particularly the time of Casimir IV (1447—1492) is the second period and the one during which, as a result of the dynastic expansion, the main problem is the sovereignty of the State and the central rule.

Finally, the third period is that of the reign of the grandsons and of the great-grandson of Władysław Jagiello, in particular the reign of Sigismund I (1506—1548) and the reign of the last Jagiellonian on the Polish throne, Sigismund Augustus (1548—1572). At that time both political theory and political practice were preoccupied with three key problems: the reform of the State, the reform of the Church in connection with the Reformation in Poland, and, finally, the social affairs raised by the Polish Brethren.

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The nobles of Lesser Poland, who were *de facto* rulers of the country after the death of Casimir the Great, wanted by the conversion of the heathen Lithuania to form a united front against the Teutonic Knights. To achieve this they arranged the marriage of the eleven-year-old Jadwiga, daughter of King Louis of Hungary and already the Queen of Poland, to Władysław Jagiello, Grand-Duke of Lithuania. For by remaining heathen Lithuania gave justification to the exterminating crusades undertaken by the Teutonic Knights. The step taken by the magnates of Lesser Poland is so described in Długosz's *Chronicle*. "The majority of wiser and more prudent men, in an attempt to spread wide

the Christian faith as well as to safeguard the Polish Kingdom and to secure other profits which Lithuania could offer, counselled to call Jagiello to the Polish throne [..]"<sup>2</sup>

When the converted Lithuanian ruler received the Polish crown, he faced two opposing political conceptions manifesting themselves in religious form characteristic of the doctrines of those times. Lithuania, of which Władysław Jagiello was the Grand-Duke, had only since the thirteenth century experienced the pressure of two German orders: the Knights of the Sword and the Teutonic Knights; and under this pressure it developed into a compact political organization to become one of the stronger countries in Eastern Europe.

When Władysław Jagiello received the Catholic faith with one part of the heathen Lithuania, he was departing from the political conceptions of his father and his brothers who had endeavoured to create a united Lithuanian and Ruthenian State, within whose boundaries there would be the Holy See of the Orthodox Church. Władysław's father, Olgierd, had married a Ruthenian princess and had accepted the Eastern faith. Similarly, the new king's brothers, Skirgiello, Korybut and Lingwen were of the same religion. The Ruthenian culture was boldly penetrating into Lithuania. Similarly, the influence of the Orthodox Church was growing there, and the influence of the Ruthenian language was likewise increasing, as this was the official language at the court of the grand-duke. It was vital for Lithuania to make their part of Ruthenia independent in religious matters of the authority of the Orthodox Church in Moscow. The knights of the Teutonic Order, on their part, maintained that the Lithuanians treated their patriarch as the Pope of the Orthodox Church. The acceptance of Catholicism by Lithuania drew the country into the Polish sphere of influence and led to closing its territory against the missionary efforts of the Teutonic Order which thus lost justification for its activity. But at the same time the very idea of a united Ruthenian and Lithuanian State with the Eastern rite in it, began to lose ground, if it was not altogether abandoned. The Union of Horodło, signed in 1413, extended the privileges of the Polish gentry to the Lithuanians newly converted to Catholicism creating thus a new élite, while an overwhelming majority of the Lithuanian gentry professing the Eastern rite was excluded from political influence, even though complete tolerance prevailed in religious matters.

<sup>2</sup> *Joannis Długossii seu Longini Canonici Cracoviensis Historiae Polonicae Libri XII, Tomus III, Libri IX, X, Cracoviae 1876, lib. decimus, A. D. 1385, p. 453:*

*"Verum maior et sanior pars, christianae fidei favore et dilatazione principiter et quiete Regni Poloniae, aliisque conditionibus, que a Lithuano offerebantur, permota, Jagellonem pro Rege assumendum [..]"*

Jagiello abandoned the idea of a Ruthenian and Lithuanian federation in order to form a united front of the Poles and the Lithuanians against the Teutonic Order which was an advocate of the German idea of imperial universalism.

When in 1386 Jagiello came to the Polish throne, a hundred and fifty years had already elapsed from the time when the Teutonic Order had been brought to the land of Chełmno. From that time onward the Knights of the Order had been gradually extending their domain in order to convert with a sword the recalcitrant Prussians; whenever it was necessary they quoted the privileges conferred on them by the Popes — Clement IV and Alexander IV — as well as those conferred by Emperor Frederic II and giving the Order all the lands won from the enemies of the Church; this last category included as a rule the pagans, the heretics and those following the Eastern rite. In this atmosphere of crusades and with considerable help from European knight-hood the Knights of the Order were building their state in the estuary of the Vistula thus seizing control of the main artery and trading route that Poland had. In 1309 the residence of the Grand-Master of the Order was moved to Malbörg which also became the capital of this strange creation — the state ruled by the Order. The organization of this state was somewhat like ancient Sparta projected into the conditions of the Middle Ages. At the dawn of the fifteenth century the Teutonic Knights ruled a wide, belt-like territory stretching along the Baltic coast from Łeba to Klaipeda and cutting like a wedge over 150 kilometres into Poland. These lands were under the absolute rule of the Order whose members were divided into knights, priests and serving brothers. Affairs of government were in the hands of the knights. The head of the State, the Grand-Master (*Hochmeister*), was elected and stayed in office till his death; he had five ministers (*oberste Gebietiger*) to assist him. Responsible to the Grand-Master were the provincial masters, each of whom was the head of a province and under them were the district chiefs. Monastic discipline coupled with religious fanaticism enabled the Knights simultaneously to keep in obedience the inhabitants of the lands held by the Order and to conduct wars of conquest. Twice a year did the Knights undertake regular expeditions against Infidels: on February 2, the feast of the Purification of Our Lady, and on August 15, the feast of the Assumption, thus making the expeditions their religious duty. For the Order was professing and spreading the doctrine of Henry de Segusio, the principal canonist of the thirteenth century, justifying religious wars. The Knights found support for their practice in the statements of the canonist that no laws, human or divine, apply to infidels

and that, in view of this, war against the pagans is always allowed and always just. Hence the spreading of the Catholic faith by military means was a religious duty and the conquest of pagan land as well as subjugation of infidels were justified.

Jagiello met the German expansion with a Polish-Lithuanian alliance bringing about in this way a war within the Christian world. This step had to be explained on the ground of religio-political doctrine, the more so that the Teutonic Knights presented to Europe the defeat that they suffered at Grunwald in 1410 as a victory of barbarity and paganism over the Church. Now, Poland, defending her policy before the whole Christian world, had to formulate clearly and exactly her conceptions opposing the assertions of the Order which accused Jagiello and tried to have Poland condemned at the Council of Constance in 1414. At that very moment the Poles succeeded in producing an independent and original political conception which became a significant contribution to the European political thought of the time.

The Polish doctrine was shaped under the influence of the struggle against the Teutonic Order and owed its inspiration to the views of the Czech preachers who combined ecclesiastical reform with anti-German movements. Under the standard of the Hussite movement the Czech people were victoriously opposing the German element that had long been suppressing them. Common enmity towards the Germans united the two nations whose languages were so like each other that the Polish people easily understood the Czech preachers. Having no dynasty of their own the Czechs offered their crown to the victor of Grunwald in order to unite the two nations within one state.

Ten years before his death Władysław Jagiello broke with the Hussite Czechs adopting the political ideas of Rome. What followed was a policy of conciliation towards the Order; the Polish doctrine opposed to the German conceptions was in a way discarded. In 1424 Jagiello formally condemned the Hussites. Inquisitors were then appointed for the persecution of heretics, persons returning from Bohemia were examined by priests, those sympathizing with the Hussite movement were threatened with confiscation of property and forfeiting the privileges of nobility. In order to break all ties between Poland and Bohemia even commerce between the two countries was stopped. The political conception of the Roman Curia triumphed in Poland and its epilogue was the tragic Polish-Hungarian crusade against the Turks ended with the defeat at Warna in 1444.

Among the political conceptions of the times of Władysław Jagiello the Polish doctrine, developed in polemic with the views of the Teutonic Knights, had a truly lasting value owing to its novel and progressive

treatment of the problem of war and the attitude of Christianity towards infidels. The creators of the doctrine were: Stanisław of Skarbimierz and a man a few years his junior — Paweł Włodkowic. Both had studied in Prague, both were professors of the Jagiellonian University and both held at different times the office of the rector of that university.

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The battle of Grunwald separates the activity of Stanisław of Skarbimierz from the creative years of Paweł Włodkowic. When Władysław Jagiello together with the nobles of Lesser Poland was successfully organizing a wide military front against the Teutonic Knights, he found conceptual justification of his efforts in the sermons of Stanisław of Skarbimierz.

As a professor of law and the Rector of the Jagiellonian University Stanisław of Skarbimierz confirmed the royal policy by his sermon *De bellis iustis* (*Of just wars*) which offered the king theoretical justification for this policy. He formulated a bold, new doctrine, directed against the policy of the Teutonic Knights even though specific conflicts are not mentioned there<sup>3</sup>. It was a matter of no small importance for Jagiello to hear it asserted from the point of view of Christianity and the Canon law that his efforts were leading to a just war.

The sermon starts with a definition of a just war which comes close to the views of a thirteenth-century Dominican Raymund of Penjafort, included in his manual for confessors. On the basis of quotations from the Bible and the norms of Canon law Stanisław presented his idea of just wars, which are — according to him — only defensive wars. This kind of war fully justifies contracting alliances with, and using the assistance of, the infidels. The situation in which the attacked party finds itself (state of unavoidable necessity) permits it to make use of every means in the struggle against the enemy.

A just war is one caused by objective factors, such as defence of the native country, a struggle for the return of lands seized by the enemy, finally — attempts to restore peace. Further, the party conducting a just war must be motivated exclusively by a desire to defend itself, as any other motivation will make the war unjust.

The right of self-defence, which justifies wars, is a natural law binding equally and invariably both for Christians and infidels; hence infidels

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<sup>3</sup> L. Ehrlich: *Paweł Włodkowic i Stanisław ze Skarbimierza*, Warszawa 1954, pp. 23—40 and L. Ehrlich: *Polski wykład prawa wojny XV wieku. Kaza-  
nie Stanisława ze Skarbimierza De bellis iustis*, Warszawa 1955.



conduct just wars against Christians, if the latter invade them and their habitations. Thus it is inadmissible to wage wars against infidels with the intention of spreading Christian faith. On the other hand, a war against Christians is just if they break peace; what is more, in such a war against wicked Christians one should use the help of infidels.

In the final portion of his sermon Stanisław of Skarbimierz spoke about the commendable death suffered in a just war. Exhorting people to obey a monarch engaged in a just war he supplied the king with arguments against those who were questioning his anti-German policy and were in doubt about the rightness of using the help of infidels and heretics in a struggle against the Teutonic Order. Thus the sermon propounds a bold and novel political doctrine about wars; it shows courage in breaking with the thesis — traditionally maintained in the Catholic world — about the obligation of an unending war against infidels.

Polish political doctrine, however, was to be developed a few years later by another law professor of Jagiellonian University, Paweł Włodkowiec.

After their defeat at Grunwald the Teutonic Knights charged that the Poles were maintaining an impious alliance with the heretics and the infidels, thanks to whom they had won the war, and also that they did not respect the privileges, received by the Order from the Popes and the Emperors, and giving it possession of the lands seized from pagans. The Poles, on the other hand, demanded the return of the lands illegally seized by the Knights.

The affairs of Poland and the Teutonic Order were discussed at the Council of Constance which convened in the autumn of 1414. The delegation to the Council had no easy task there, as the Teutonic Knights were assiduously courting general approval asserting that they were the defenders of Christianity against the invasion of barbarism. The Order met at Constance with the sympathy of European Knighthood which frequently participated in the looting campaigns undertaken by the Teutonic Knights under the pretense of converting infidels. Among the Polish delegates was Paweł Włodkowiec and the difficult task of conducting a theoretical polemic with the Order fell to him<sup>4</sup>. He had

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<sup>4</sup> Paweł Włodkowiec defended Polish affairs against the accusations of the Teutonic Knights on four occasions: in Buda in 1413, in Wrocław in 1420, at the General Council in the years 1415—1418 and before the Pope in 1420. Długosz wrote about him in his chronicle: “[...] *Vir probitate et raro in patriam zelo atque amore insignis, cuilibet viro illustri coaequandus [...]*” (*Joannis Długossi seu Longini Canonici Cracoviensis Historiae Polonicae Libri XII, Tomus IV, lib. XII, op. cit., A. D. 1435, p. 567*).

to develop and explain a doctrine — now no longer for his own country as did Stanisław of Skarbimierz — but in order to win for Polish views the most eminent representatives of the intellectual world of his time.

The writings of Włodkowic reveal an outline of the Polish political thought of his time<sup>5</sup>. Its principles are to be found first of all in a detailed study written by him in 1415 for the Fathers of the Council concerning the respective powers of the Pope and the Emperor over the heathens. The Rector of the Jagiellonian Alma Mater returned to his ideas seventeen years later, almost towards the end of his life, in a letter to bishop Zbigniew Oleśnicki who was successfully placing Poland in the line of Rome's policy<sup>6</sup>. In order to disprove the assertions of the Teutonic Knights Włodkowic formulated, and in a sense even codified, the laws of nature in whose light the claims of the enemies of Poland became groundless. Although it was not his intention to write a systematic treatise, his polemic concerning the principles provided an opportunity for outlining a new Polish political doctrine. For Włodkowic developed a gift for combining academic knowledge with practical politics.

Viewing the Polish political conceptions with some simplification we see that it made several assumptions. Firstly, it posed the existence of laws obeyed by all nature. Among them is the law of universal struggle for the preservation of one's being. This law of self-defence, according to Stanisław of Skarbimierz, "could be observed in the behaviour of creatures without reason, which protect themselves as well as they can, and defend themselves and often rise and turn against one that strikes them"<sup>7</sup>. From the law of self-defence issues another rule universally valid in nature: desire to maintain peace. For "not only reasonable creatures but also animals seek peace, as they avoid death and cessation in all manner, and likewise do plants, such as trees, which bud better if they are not shaken by winds. For this reason the branches of trees

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<sup>5</sup> *Starodawne prawa polskiego pomniki. Rerum Publicarum Scientiae quae saeculo XV in Polonia riguit Monumenta Litteraria*, Edited by M. Bobrzyński, vol. V, part. I, Kraków 1878, pp. 147—194, and 234—316; Ehrlich: *Paweł Włodkiewicz i Stanisław ze Skarbimierza*, pp. 58—172 and L. Ehrlich: *Rektor Paweł Włodkowic, rzecznik obrony przeciw Krzyżakom*, Kraków 1963.

<sup>6</sup> K. Górski: *Z dziejów walki o pokój i sprawiedliwość międzynarodową*, Toruń 1964, pp. 27—43.

<sup>7</sup> Ehrlich: *Polski wykład prawa wojny XV wieku. Kazanie Stanisława ze Skarbimierza De bellis iustis*, pp. 114—115, § 19:

„[...] Hoc enim est cernere in creaturis irrationabilibus, que se prout possunt tuentur et defendunt, et interdum in se ferientem remordendo consurgunt”.

oppose those who want to break them off or sever them, and it would not be so if they did not wish for peace"<sup>8</sup>.

Secondly, there are natural laws common to all people independently of their religion. Among such laws is ownership of which no one can wilfully be deprived. Similarly, freedom of religious convictions is a natural law obeyed by all reasonable creatures. Hence imposing religious beliefs by force is a breach of natural order.

In the group of natural laws one also finds the institution of power without which no human society can exist. However, only two kinds of power are justifiable on the ground of natural law: the one that is given by God and the one which the subjects accept. Power imposed by force and violence, on the other hand, is contrary to the laws of nature.

Thirdly, there are natural laws regulating the coexistence within a human society. The mutual relations of people have their foundation in the virtue of love which is "above all other virtues in importance", while "the cruelty of hypocrites is worse than any other crime or sin"<sup>9</sup>. The injunction that should be generally obeyed in human interrelations is: „thou shalt not do to another what thou dost not want done to the”<sup>10</sup>. Hence it is necessary to maintain friendly relations not only among the countries of Christianity but also with the pagans. The same applies to the conclusion of treaties and agreements which "are observed even among barbarian nations on the strength of the natural law"<sup>11</sup>.

Fourthly, Włodkowiec endorsed fully the conception of just wars

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128—129, § 29.1:

„[...] *Et nedum rationalia ymmo bruta pacem querunt, quia mortem et perniciem quantum possunt declinant, et vegetabilia velud arbores, que melius germinant si ventorum concussionibus carent. Unde rami arborum dum quis frangere vel incidere ipsos velit resistunt, quod non esset nisi pacem habere velint.*

<sup>9</sup> K. Górski: „Ostatnie słowo” Pawła Włodkowica o zakonie krzyżackim z roku 1432, „Zapiski Historyczne”, vol. XXIX, No 2, Toruń 1964, p. 160:

„[...] *Et de quanto caritas maior noscitur esse omnibus aliis virtutibus, tanto ipocritarum crudelitas sibi opposita deterior omnibus aliis sceleribus vel peccatis.*

<sup>10</sup> *Conclusiones, datæ per Magistrum Paulum de Cracovia contra Ordinem Theutonicorum sanctæ Mariæ Virginis in sacro Constantiensi Consilio* [in:] *Starodawne prawa polskiego pomniki*, op. cit. vol. V, part I, p. 188:

„*Quod tibi, non vis fieri, alteri non facias*», et lege divina: «*Ne transgrediaris limites proximi tui etc.*»

<sup>11</sup> Paweł Włodkowiec's letter to Zbigniew Oleśnicki [in:] Górski: *Ostatnie słowo Pawła Włodkowica...*, p. 161:

„[...] *ruptis federibus pacis et pactis sole(m)pnibus violatis, que etiam apud barbaras naciones iure gentium naturali firmiter observantur [...]*”.

worked out by his academic colleague, Stanisław of Skarbimierz — a conception which affected the Polish doctrine of the time of the Council of Constance. Making the principles of the natural law his starting point Włodkowiec argued that those principles were binding for the Pope and even more so for the Emperor. In view of this all privileges and all theories that are contrary to the law of nature are worthless, a statement which — when applied to the conflict between Poland and the Teutonic order — amounted to a total denial of any justification for the Order's existence and activity.

Apart from the problems related to the conflict with the Teutonic Knights the Polish doctrine put forward a novel theoretical concept: that the heathen and Christian State authority considered in terms of the natural law may stand in opposition to the idea of universalism both papal and imperial.

In the second half of the year 1416 there appeared in Constance a libel on Poland penned by a Dominican, John Falkenberg, who was calling, on behalf of the defence of religion, to an uncompromising fight against and the destruction of the Poles and their King who together — according to the author — had gone back to Paganism and were working for the ruin of Christianity. In spite of energetic protests from the Polish delegation neither the Council nor the Pope condemned Falkenberg's libel. The affair dragged on for several years after the closing of the Council, because Polish relations with the Hussite Bohemia aroused considerable fears and objections both on the part of Pope Martin V and on the part of Emperor Sigismund of Luxemburg. Only in 1424, when Jagiello changed his attitude towards the Hussites, did the Pope issue a bull condemning Falkenberg's libel. The Poles were referred to in the bull as "true Catholics and eager confessors of true religion", while Poland was called "an eminent part of Church militant".

Those were already the times when the policy of the Roman Curia triumphed in Poland.

The defeat at Warna meant, if not a defeat, at any rate a considerable weakening of the policy of Rome whose spokesmen in Poland were the great feudal lords both ecclesiastic and secular. The ill-starred crusade against Turkey impoverished the royal treasury; Długosz wrote about it: "throughout his stay in Hungary King Władysław contracted

heavy loans offering as securities almost all towns, castles, lands, villages and even the customs and the royal income [ . . . ]”<sup>12</sup>.

The gentry took the opportunity provided by the defeat at Warna to oppose to the policy of the magnates their own idea of Poland fully independent both of the papacy and the empire. They found a champion of their designs in the person of King Casimir IV Jagiello (1447—1492) whose reign covered most of the second half of the fifteenth century and who became the leader of the new political camp.

Soon the time of great economic, territorial and political expansion was to begin for Poland. Having a devoted ally in the gentry the King began to revoke the privileges of the Church, imposed taxes on priests and himself nominated bishops; in his policy towards the Teutonic Order he likewise took little notice of Rome.

More than half a century had to elapse before the battle of Grunwald bore fruit. The peace of Toruń brought to an end in 1466 the long-lasting wars with the Order. Poland returned to the Baltic coast and made the Order her dependent. The Baltic ports were now open to the ever-increasing Polish export of grain, wood and meat. The Polish gentry was growing wealthy, the towns great, the country was becoming increasingly stronger and could provide a good basis for the dynastic expansion of the Jagiellonians who now reached for the crowns of Bohemia, Hungary and Moldavia.

The measures of Casimir IV found zealous supporters not only among the gentry but also among the humanists gathered round the King. As they were warm admirers of Roman law, they advocated a strong rule for the State. The views that were held in these circles were: that the good of the State justifies the revoking of class privileges, that for the safety of the country taxes must be imposed and that — in exceptional cases — private as well as ecclesiastic estates may be confiscated.

Owing to his alliance with the gentry Casimir IV succeeded in constructing a solid system of state administration, but at the same time he had to yield now and then under the pressure of the selfishness of the gentry. For he needed their approval to change the laws, to impose taxes, to declare wars. By their one-sided decisions the gentry were restricting the rights of the towns in spite of considerable burdens

<sup>12</sup> *Joannis Długossii seu Longini Canonici Cracoviensis Historiae Polonicae Libri XII, Tomus IV, Libri XI, XII, op. cit. lib. XII, A. D. 1442, p. 683:*

„Unde et accidit, quod Wladislaus Rex per eos omnes annos, quibus in Regno Hungariae commoratus est, fere omnes civitates, castra, terras, oppida, villas, thelonea et introitus regales, in pluribus milibus et amplissimis summis inscriberet et obligaret [ . . . ]”.

imposed by the State on the latter. The King gave in to the demand of the gentry to increase the control of the State over trade and commerce. Simultaneously, acting under the pressure of the gentry, he excluded the burgesses from all political influence. The towns did not obtain a right to send their representatives to the lower house — just then being formed — which became an exclusive domain of the gentry. Nor could the towns receive protection from the all-powerful royal council, called the Senate at that time, and the King, involved in the conflict between the nobility and the gentry, was likewise indifferent to their needs.

An increasingly arbitrary attitude of the gentry towards the burgesses and the peasants did not arrest the deep processes of state organization that were taking place under the reign of Casimir IV. In consequence of the weakening of class ties, also of religious and vocational bonds, the unity of the State was growing at the cost of those traditional social bonds. Many factors affected this process with varying intensity at different times. The sense of nationality was deepening in the struggle against the Teutonic Order which impersonated the German drive to conquer. The growth of economic energy created the need of a strong central rule and of the unification of laws, weights and measures. Increasingly consolidated in its opposition against Rome, the whole society came to understand the importance of state independence. Finally, the reception of the Roman law helped not a little the process of organizational changes within the State.

Against the background of changes in state organization the political doctrines of the time appear with greater clarity and distinctness; this applies particularly to *Monumentum pro Reipublicae Ordinatione* (*Proposal for the Organization of the Republic*)<sup>13</sup> which appeared in 1475, and the *Consilia Callimachi* (*Callimachus' Counsels*) which was written almost twenty years later<sup>14</sup>. These two are political programmes, or rather practical guides, written by two lay thinkers, each of whom was thoroughly versed in practical politics.

The author of the *Proposal*, Jan Ostroróg — doctor of law, senator and Wojewoda of Poznań — was an advocate of Poland's unlimited sovereignty. On the other hand, the author of the *Counsels*, Philip de Teodalia Buonaccorsi, called Callimachus, composed a concise handbook

<sup>13</sup> *Clarissimi baronis Joannis Ostrorog, iuris utriusque doctoris, Monumentum pro comitiis generalibus regni sub rege Casimiro, pro Reipublicae ordinatione*, published in: *Starodawne prawa polskiego pomniki, op. cit.*, vol. V, part I, pp. 115—139.

<sup>14</sup> I. Chrzanowski i S. Kot: *Humanizm i Reformacja w Polsce*, Lwów 1927, p 132 et sqq.

of the art of ruling at the time when the gentry were beginning to doubt whether the dynastic policy of the Jagiellonians was right. Both writers were realistic in their practical postulates, with the one difference that while Ostroróg concentrated on the interest of the State, Callimachus was concerned with the good of the dynasty.

Ostroróg formulated his program with a passion never previously encountered in Polish literature. "You, worthy gentlemen", he wrote in his *Preface*, "are the foundation and the pillars, the axle and the support of the mother country. Strive as you always did to prove by your counsel and your deeds that your attachment to the Commonwealth is above your love for yourselves, for your private wealth, for your children, brothers, and all your success. When the common good suffers, in such a way your own well-being is affected and must break down suddenly <sup>15</sup>".

Within the sixty-seven chapters of the *Proposal* we can distinguish broadly two groups of problems: the first comprises questions pertaining to the national sovereignty of the State; the second deals with the conditions indispensable for a smooth functioning of the state machinery. Ostroróg sees the idea of sovereignty as related to the person of the monarch and considers the king the sole representative of the State <sup>16</sup>.

The *Proposal* begins with the declaration of its main principle which is that "the King of Poland does not recognize anybody as his superior and has none but God above himself <sup>17</sup>. Thus he must not be dependent on the Papacy either financially or juridically. Payments and legal appeals to Rome are degrading. The interest of the State requires that bishops be nominated by the king. "A painful and inhuman ailment afflicts the entire free Kingdom of Poland also in this that we let the

<sup>15</sup> *Monumentum pro comitiis generalibus regni... [in:] Starodawne prawa polskiego pomniki, op. cit., vol. V, part I, p. 115:*

„Vos illustres Domini! columnae et bases, cardines ac vectes patriae, ita ut semper soliti estis, facite, ut consiliis et factis vestris plus patriam quam se ipsos ametis, plus rempublicam quam privatam, quam liberos, quam fratres, quam denique fortunas omnes; sic in publico singularia crescent, et fundata quaeque stabiliuntur solide. Sin autem commune bonum semel casum dederit, et singularia quoque privatorum labi ac pessum iri necesse est, ruinamque comitari praecipitem”.

<sup>16</sup> W. Voisé: *Doktryna polityczno-prawna Jana Ostroroga*, „Państwo i Prawo”, 1954, No 6, p. 1037.

<sup>17</sup> *Monumentum pro comitiis generalibus regni... [in:] Starodawne prawa polskiego pomniki, op. cit., vol. V, part. II, p. 116:*

„Poloniae rex asserit, (quod et verum est, nemini enim subiacet) nullum superiorem se, praeter Deum, recognoscere”.

constant cunning of the Italians so deceive and delude us as to make us pay, under the pretense of piety, which is rather superstition and counterfeit of learning, such large sums of money annually to the so-called Roman Court.<sup>18</sup> "Is this not hypocrisy," asks Ostroróg bitterly, "that whenever the Pope pleases, even when such is not the will of the king and the nobles, he sends to Poland whatsoever jubilee bulls he wishes for the sake of obtaining money under the pretense of the absolution of sins [...] Ah, how we Poles let ourselves be deluded [...] A sufficient absolution is granted to any that labour and gather harvest [...]"<sup>19</sup>

The author of the *Proposal* is convinced that "through the slyness of the courtiers and the stubbornness of the litigants not only appeals but also special summons go to the Apostolic Curia<sup>20</sup>". And so he exclaims in the same chapter: "Gentlemen of Poland! Do not let the cunning Italians delude you any longer. We have bishops in our kingdom as well as an archbishop who is also the primate; let the former examine the cases and let the latter pass his final judgement, if this be necessary."<sup>21</sup>

Ostroróg was demanding consistently an independent ecclesiastic hierarchy for Poland. Thus he wrote: "It seems better that the king should nominate bishops to ensure their being not only learned but also well-regarded, lest their quarrelsome conduct and unpleasant personalities arouse hatred constantly [...]"<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter VIII, p. 120:

*„Dolendum etiam profecto et inhumanum facinus, Poloniae regnum alioqui liberum tantis Italarum in dies fraudari decipi astutiis, ut tam magna pecuniae summa ad Romanam ut vocant, curiam singulis efferatur annis sub specie pietatis falsaeque religionis, immo superstitionis potius in contribuenda ingenti pensione, quam Sacram sive Annatam vocant [...]"*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter XIV, pp. 122—123:

*„Nec illud impostura caret, ut Romanus pontifex, quoties sibi videtur, etiam rege, proceribus invititis, bullas nescio quas, quae iubilaei dicuntur, in regnum mittere solet ad emungendam pecuniam sub praetextu remissionis peccatorum [...] Interim heu quam multum illudimur o Poloni! [...] Satis superque indulgentiarum meretur, quisquis laborat, et habeat [...]"*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter XIII, p. 122:

*„[...] quoties curtisanorum astu vel importunitate litigantium non appellationes solum sed etiam extraordinariae citationes ad curiam Romanam fiunt"*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter XIII, p. 122:

*„Quare, domini Poloni! ne ultra patiamini vos ab astutis Italis decipi. Sunt in regno episcopi, extat metropolitanus et idem primas, illi causas discutiant, in vero terminet et finiat, si quando opus erit"*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter VII, p. 120:

*„Quare propter maius malum melior videtur episcopi electio, quae fit a prin-*



However, not dependence on Rome alone contradicts the sovereignty of the State; likewise the judiciary relations of the towns with Germany encroach upon Poland's independence. Ostroróg firmly opposed the sending of court appeals to Magdeburg: "What negligence, what shame, what ignominy, need, or rather blindness caused that this famous and free kingdom should seek justice in Magdeburg."<sup>23</sup>

It was the consideration of national dignity that prompted Ostroróg the need to use the Polish language in court records (chapter XXXIX), in monasteries and in sermons. "It is an undignified and disgusting thing", he wrote, "that Poles in many places and many churches in this country should listen to sermons in German."<sup>24</sup>

Besides problems related to the sovereignty of the Polish nation there is in the *Proposal* a group of problems dealing with the unity and the efficient functioning of state machinery. Now, the strength and consolidation of the State is, according to the *Proposal*, determined by the following factors:

1. Uniform law which, despite temporary maintainance of estate differences, excludes arbitrary decisions (chapters XXXII, XXXVII).
2. Unconditional obeying of the law and of royal orders by all the citizens (chapter III).
3. Efficient machinery of administration achieved through royal nominations of qualified salaried officials (chapter XLVII).
4. General taxation including both laymen and clerics (chapters X, VI).
5. General obligation of military service of length varying according to estate (chapters XLI—XLV).
6. Guaranteed supremacy of State over Church which should serve national interests. Hence the obligation of the clerics to pay taxes and

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*cipe, ut is eligatur praesul, nedum qui doctus sit sed et gratus, ne ingrata vita et ingrata persona magis exacuat unum genus hominum contra aliud odio perpetuo".*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter XXIV, p. 126:

*„O stupor, o ignavia nostra, o pudor et dedecus, opprobriumque ingens, quae necessitas, vel potius stultitia, tamdiu te in hoc inclito ac libero regno durare permisit, ut rege suo spreto proceribusque repudiatis omni denique optatum universitate contempta, tamquam in universo regno hoc iustus et sagax non sit iudex, tamquam deficiant sapientes prudentesque ac litterati viri, in Maydemburgius quaeratur [...]".*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, chapter XXII, p. 125:

*„O rem indignam, omnibus Polonis ignominiosam! In templis nostris lingua Theutonica multis in locis praedicatur, et quod inniquius, in loco suggesto ac dignori, ubi una tantum anus duaeve auscultant, plurimis Polonis in angulo quopiam cum suo concionatore constrictis".*

the State's right to regulate the number of priests and their education (chapters XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX).

7. Uniform weights and measures, stability of currency, care of the proper state and the safety of roads, control of prices, finally — suppression of vagrancy and drunkenness (chapters LII, LXIII, LIX, LIV, LXI, LXII).

In such a manner did Ostroróg draw the first Polish image of a modern state.

The other political program of the time, Callimachus' *Counsels*, is a short outline that has never ceased to arouse interest on account of its contents and the extraordinary person of its author.

In 1470 came to Poland the thirty-three-year-old Philip Buonaccorsi, called Callimachus, emigrating from Rome where he had taken part in an uncovered conspiracy, was later accused and pursued as the chief leader of an unsuccessful republican and anti-papal *coup d'état*.

As a learned humanist he was welcome in Poland, the more so that the relations between Cracow and Rome were not of the best at the time. He remained in his adopted country till the end of his life, and for more than a quarter of a century exercised considerable influence on Polish political and cultural life. Callimachus soon joined the king's *entourage* and became the principal advocate and exponent of the Jagiellonian dynastic expansion. He devoted his pen and his diplomatic skill to the task of proclaiming at the courts of Europe the *laus immortalis* of the Jagiellonians, who — in his view — when strengthened by the absolute rule in Poland were the principal power in Christianity<sup>25</sup>.

The *Counsels*, though they are no more than a small part of the varied heritage that he left, are an important document of Polish political thought<sup>26</sup>. They were probably written in the last year of King Casimir's reign for the private use of the future king of Poland, Jan Olbracht, hence they have a simplified, almost telegraphic form. This brief compendium of the methods of governing offers practical suggestions for ensuring success to the dynastic policy of the Jagiellonians.

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<sup>25</sup> J. Skoczek: *Legenda Kallimacha w Polsce*, Lwów 1939, pp. 18—44 and 60—82.

<sup>26</sup> The titles of Callimachus' works are: *Rhetorica*; *De vita et moribus Gregorii Sanocensis, archiepiscopi leopoliensis*; *Vita et mores Sbignei cardinalis*; *Historia de his, quae a Venetis tentata sunt, Persis ac Tartaris contra Turcos movendis*; *Historia de rege Vladislao, seu clade Varnensi*; *Ad Innocentium Octavum... de bello inferendo Turcis oratio*; *Attila seu de gestis Attilae*; *Consilia Callimachi* and metrical works, elegies, epigrams, letters and various materials.

Justification for the contents of the compendium can only be found in the aims and interests of the dynasty and so, in spite of some contrary attempts already made, the work cannot be evaluated on any other ground.

Callimachus' remarks contained in thirty-five short passages, have been summarized by Estreicher<sup>27</sup> in the following thirteen items:

“1. Privy Council ought to be formed for exclusive consideration of secret affairs.

2. Clerics and laymen within the Council ought to be involved in a quarrel. Excesses should be punished. Bishops should be excluded from the Senate.

3. The Diet should not acquire too much influence; a royal faction should exist there likewise; the gentry should not be allowed to assemble.

4. New laws directed against the sovereign should not be let either into the Senate or into the Diet.

5. The gentry should be threatened with a war and thus forced to pay taxes half of which should go into the royal treasury.

6. Officials should pay for nominations; abbots should make annual payments for holding their abbeys. Offices at court should be few and modest. Royal annuities (*jurgielt*) should not be granted. District chiefs (*starostowie*) should be supervised and should obey the king.

7. Chancellors should have as little to occupy them as possible.

8. The canonical election of the bishops should be abolished.

9. Bishops and priests should not be allowed to take part in politics. Their estates should be seized and they should live on tithes.

10. Plebeians, that is burgesses, should be favoured and given secular and ecclesiastic offices. Restrictions ought to be discontinued.

11. The privileges of the gentry (*Loisa*) should be repealed.

12. Wallachia should be invaded and brother Sigismund offered the throne. Frederic ought to be given Prussia. The principality of Mazovia should be joined to the Polish crown.

13. An attempt ought to be made to have most of the gentry killed off in the campaign against Wallachia. The rest ought to be poisoned (*venenum propinato*)”.

The failure of Jan Olbracht's campaign against Wallachia in 1497 put an end to the dynastic policy of the Jagiellonians. The time of expansion was over and Callimachus' *Counsels* met with general con-

<sup>27</sup> S. Estreicher: *Rady Kallimacha* [in:] *Studia z dziejów kultury*, Warszawa 1949, p. 172.

demnation. Later on they were to be used as a weapon in defence of anarchy in state organization, until they became the main argument that the gentry had against any attempt to strengthen the central rule<sup>28</sup>.

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The depth of the changes that the sixteenth century brought along can best be judged by considering the traits of the national character that emerged in those years. So strong was the impress of the times on society and so long was the road travelled by the Polish culture between the end of the fifteenth century and the reign of the three last Jagiellonians: Alexander (1501—1506), Sigismund the Old (1506—1548) and his son Sigismund Augustus (1548—1572) that Poland became one of the leading countries of Europe. Erasmus of Rotterdam wrote admiringly about the Polish nation: " I congratulate the nation which, though at one time regarded as barbaric, has now thriving scholarship, law, morals, religion, and is in everything so contrary to all crudeness that it can compete with those nations of the world that are most advanced in culture." <sup>29</sup>

In this period of energetic intellectual activity political literature occupied no mean place, for, as usual, epochs of radical changes have a need of great politicians and ideologues.

The principal nerve of those changes was the stream of gold that was flowing into Poland in exchange for the ever-increasing export of agricultural products unrestricted by any tariffs. But it was only the gentry that were amassing wealth. At the time when their private estates were growing, the treasury stayed empty, the townspeople were prey of economic restrictions and the peasants were at the mercy of the owners of manors. Likewise, only the gentry, free from everyday cares, began to have ambitions and cultural aspirations. They took care to educate their sons, they travelled abroad and maintained contacts with the leading European intellectuals. They also built stately mansions into which a worldly style of living soon penetrated, for they were promptly spending the money obtained from exported grain on articles of luxury imported from abroad. The gentry were regarding themselves as the only citizens with full rights, being convinced that their duty of defending the country left them free from any other obligation

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<sup>28</sup> W. Sobociński: *Kallimach o ideologii państwowo-prawnej polskiego Odrodzenia*, „Państwo i Prawo”, 1953, No 12, p. 790.

<sup>29</sup> *Korespondencja Erazma z Rotterdamu z Polakami*, Translated and edited M. Cytowska, Warszawa 1965, p. 21.

towards the State whose course they were attempting to control. They even imbibed the ideas of ancient literature in order to make use of them. In liberty they sought justification both for religious freedom and for their own lack of respect for any authority. The notion of equality was turned by them into a weapon to be used against the magnates, while at the same time discrimination against the peasants and the burgesses was maintained. The burgesses were plebeians for the gentry and the peasants — slaves. The system of government in Poland was compared to that of Athens, Sparta, and most of all — to that of the Roman republic. Hence, while exercising absolute power in their own estates, they repeated empty phrases about the disastrous results of tyranny to attack the imaginary "*absolutum dominium*" of their own king. Their selfishness put an end to the municipal self-government by giving the wojewodas control over trade and commerce. Finally, when exclusive right to all foreign commerce was legally guaranteed to the gentry, the economic routes of the Polish towns were severed.

Even more ruthlessly did the gentry deal with the peasants seizing for themselves the right to decide about the lives and the death of their serfs. They passed legislation forbidding the serfs to leave their villages and then gradually increased the amount of services due to the master of the manor. As the knight was turning into the gentleman of the manor, so the enterprising merchant was turning into the pedlar and the free peasant into the serf.

The selfish policy of the gentry did not bear fruit at once, because their own wealth to some extent helped to preserve the prosperity of the towns. As to peasants, there again the wide territories in the east helped the runaway serfs to find better working conditions. At that time the Jagiellonians' interest in the eastern borders increased so much that they abandoned their dynastic policy to defend Lithuania's eastern frontier and thus got involved in a never-ending war against Moscow. The time was not remote when the magnates from the eastern territories were to decide about Poland's destinies.

Meanwhile, during the reign of the last Jagiellonians, the middle gentry were still clearly opposing the magnates. In 1504 a bill was passed to the effect that only king could, with the Diet's consent, grant or mortgage royal estates with which previously he could freely reward his aristocratic counsellors. Another bill, passed in the same year and likewise directed against the magnates, forbade holding several high offices by the same person. An act called *Nihil novi*, passed a year later, decreed that only common decisions of the king, the senate and the lower house were the will of the State.

In the fourth decade of the sixteenth century the advocates and supporters of the Reformation among the gentry undertook the reform of Church and State. Well-educated followers of Luther and Calvin became the leaders of the Catholic gentry. Their program aroused the gentry and soon political life and political writings began to reveal vitality hitherto unobserved.

The program of reform did not provide a uniform and systematic political platform; it rather consisted of various postulates which were meant to combat corruption in religion and in state organization, and that chiefly through return to and improvement of forgotten laws that were no longer observed. At the Diet and local assemblies there were loud demands for "putting the laws in execution" and in this very term the gentry unwittingly combined a medieval respect for the common law with the renaissance ideas about the role of Church and that of State.

The demands for church reforms were accompanied by demand for reform of state organization. Independence was claimed for the Polish church in which supreme authority was to be held by the synod headed by the king. Demands were also voiced that the priests pay taxes and that ecclesiastical jurisdiction over laymen be wholly and irrevocably abolished. There were attempts to diminish religious differences between the Eastern and the Western rite; this was to be achieved by the abolition of the celibacy of priests, Holy Communion in two forms and the introduction of Polish into liturgy. Some demanded that crown estates, granted by the king to his prospective supporters contrary to the bill of 1504, should be retrieved. It was hoped that this measure would permit financial and military re-organization, because the gentry were not inclined to take on themselves the burden of taxation. In the last period of the reform movement its Protestant leaders wished to strengthen the royal power regarding it as a safeguard against the attacks of the Catholic clergy.

When the general Council of Trent closed its sessions in 1563 and the Church was consolidating her strength before a counterattack, the forces of reform in Poland had already realized their program in part. But that was their last victory. The Jesuits, brought to Poland in 1565, at once launched a well-planned campaign that led gradually to a complete control over the political and cultural life of the country.

In the history of Polish political thought the reform movement occupies a special position, because its relatively abundant literature reflects, on the one hand — the great passions of those times, and on the other — an original conception of state organization, a conception developed through grafting the bourgeois ideas of the Renaissance and

the Reformation upon the stock formed by the mentality of the gentry.

The first kings from the Jagiellonian dynasty introduced into Poland numerous elements of the Eastern culture: these were later multiplied in the course of frequent contacts — friendly or hostile — with Russia, the Tartars, Moldavia and Turkey. From the end of the fifteenth century onward Italy exercised a powerful influence on the culture and mentality of the Polish gentry, and in the fourth decade of the sixteenth century a wave of Protestantism coming from Germany and Switzerland swept over Poland.

Both the Renaissance and the Reformation were the products of town culture; they were the outcome of the energy of new forces which were seeking an ally and supporter in a strong rule. In Poland these ideas were absorbed by the gentry which was, as a class indifferent, if not hostile, towards the bourgeoisie. For the gentry accepted the criticism of traditional institutions and of established authorities but at the same time their ideal remained the manor house dominating the surrounding countryside economically, politically and culturally. Polish gentry had little understanding either of the social dynamics of the towns or of the role of state authority as the factor that directs and regulates social life. The distinctive character of the Polish Renaissance resulted from the fusion of the elements of town culture, brought from outside, and the egocentric attitude of the gentry; and this distinctiveness is also characteristic of our political thought.

Out of the fairly large political literature that was written under the last Jagiellonians and appeared in the form of booklets, letters-proposals, scholarly studies, we have selected only a few items and have grouped them according to their authors' attitude towards the religious, political and legal institutions then in existence. On the one side are those who associate the reform of state organization with the change of traditional institutions. On the other — those who defend the traditional order together with the privileged position of the Church.

The leading position in the first group is occupied by Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski (1503—1572) and Jakub Przyłuski who was almost exactly his contemporary. With them can be grouped the Polish Brethren who were indifferent, if not hostile, towards the established institutions.

The defenders of the old order are represented by Stanisław Zaborowski, the author of a short tract, and by the principal theorist of the group — Stanisław Orzechowski (1513—1566).

Frycz Modrzewski made himself known to the Polish society in the forties of the sixteenth century with his small pamphlets: *De poena homicidii* and *Oratio Philaletis Peripatetici*, and with his dissertation *De Legatis ad Concilium mittendis*. He expressed in these writings his

thoroughly modern view on the need of one law which should be respected by the whole community. Modrzewski opposed "the inequality of law and punishment", making reference to the current law concerning homicide for which a peasant or a burgess was threatened with death penalty while the gentry were only fined. The idea of the same laws for all the inhabitants is connected with the writer's criticism of the regulations directed against the burgesses whom the gentry legally denied the right of possessing land. "I have often admired the wisdom of our ancestors", he wrote, "and its reflection in many laws that were formerly passed; but when it comes to this particular law, which was decreed under the influence of hatred of plebeians, I deplore it and consider it a shame. For our ancestors refused thereby credibility to the testimony of the plebeians, as if anybody who is not a gentleman were of necessity a villain, or as if a plebeian could not hold any opinion about the affairs of the knights."<sup>30</sup> The idea of the same laws for all must have been strikingly bold at the time, the more so that it clashed with the established notion about the gentry as the core of the nation, and stretched the notion of the nation to cover all the social classes.

In the pamphlet discussing the sending of delegates to the general council Modrzewski expressed his conviction that the weakness of the Church could be overcome through a broad participation of the faithful in religious matters and that is why re-organization of the Church should be undertaken. Diocesan councils, provincial councils and then a national council should appoint delegates to the general council by intermediate elections. In Modrzewski's writings the problems of ecclesiastical reform received abundant attention, because he was under the illusion that he would succeed in solving a number of controversial matters which were at that time disrupting the unity of the Christian world. Meanwhile the Church rejected the idea of the Reformation in order to undertake soon a counter-attack. If religious matters in Modrzewski's writings have only historical interest for us, his principal concept of state organization is invariably stimulating and thought-provoking. For Modrzewski devised as original a model of state organization as did the great Florentine, although representing the other extreme. While for Macchiavelli the proof of the State's power is the efficient functioning of the government which finds complete justifi-

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<sup>30</sup> *Mowa Prawdomowcy Perypatetyka o postanowieniu sejmu zezwalajacym na odbieranie mieszczenom wiejskich posiadlosci, wypowiedziana w kole ludzi uczonych 1 kwietnia 1543 r.* [in:] A. Frycz Modrzewski: *Dzieła wszystkie*, t. II: *Mowy*, Warszawa 1954, s. 183.



cation of all its measures in the achieved end, for Modrzewski the value and the strength of State can be measured by the moral sense of its citizens. According to Modrzewski political and legal institutions merely organize society and maintain order within it, and it is the social morality that is of real importance for the State. Is it not an aimless play of appearances when institutions change and people remain the same?

In 1551 Modrzewski published his larger work, *Commentationum de Republica emendanda libri quinque*; contrary to its title it contained only three books: *Morals (De moribus)*, *Laws (De legibus)* and the *War (De bello)*. The remaining two books: the *Church (De ecclesia)* and the *School (De schola)* appeared only in the second edition dated 1554. One can thus say without risking any great inexactness that the *Amendment of the Commonwealth* consists of two treatises; the first three books present a model of new state organization while the remaining two — and particularly the book discussing the Church — contain a project of ecclesiastic reform.

In its general outline Modrzewski's concept of state organization corresponds with the titles of the first three books. The morals of society, being the foundation of the State, are protected from within by legal institutions and from without — by a well-organized army. The invariable weaknesses of any society arise from the pettiness of human nature which causes an unceasing drama, from that uncontrolled play of passions which reveal themselves in envy, pride, selfishness and greed. Only through self-discipline, accompanied by a strong sense of moral responsibility, can human weaknesses be overcome. External factors may only work indirectly and may be supplementary in maintaining morals. Modrzewski was aware of the role played by the law in the moral transformation of people and devoted his second book to this problem. But beside the law there are other external factors precipitating the formation of the moral sense; these are: education, the moral attitude of the rulers and the supervision of social decency. Education and knowledge mould the character and develop the habit of reflective thinking which checks the impulsive reactions of passion. The moral attitude of the rulers is of greater importance in strengthening social morals than the structure of government institutions. The confidence of the citizens in the wisdom and morality of their rulers, the real and not merely institutional authority of the latter, uphold public morality. For this reason Modrzewski demands that the sovereign, the senators, the deputies and government officers be near-perfect in character and in mind, for only men of such attributes ought to be allowed to hold public offices. The author of *The Amendment of the Commonwealth* is not a utopian prophet; he does not neglect the insti-

tutions that organize society and maintain public order. He regards as indispensable various offices of supervisors of public morals which, in Modrzewski's notion, cover family life, mutual relations among people, social welfare, public safety, honesty in trade and commerce, building, hygiene, roads, public transport — in short, everything that affects the standard of living and the culture of everyday life.

Naturally, the best guarantee of the preservation of public morality is the same law for everybody consistently enforced; with this the author of *The Amendment* deals in his second book. He invariably presents his ideas in the context of a critical analysis of the conditions in Poland. He shows that the privileged position of the gentry must give rise to their high-handed treatment of the other estates and to their indifference towards state affairs. "Thus, there is nothing more dangerous to the Commonwealth," he wrote, "than different laws and different penalties according to the person of the offender. For one law should speak to all, and in one voice; it should have the same power over all, and when it forbids something, it should justify and explain in one and only one manner the profit of all, the displeasure of all, the harm of all."<sup>31</sup>

However, the law must be efficacious and that means in practice that it must rest on an efficient apparatus of administration of justice, independence and impartiality of judges, quickness and simplicity of legal procedure, finally, on a regular court of appeals. While within the boundaries of a country public morality is guarded and upheld by the existing law, social order should be defended against external dangers by a well-drilled military force to which Modrzewski devoted his third book. He included there a number of suggestions concerning the establishment of a regular treasury and taxes, the organization and drilling of an army, strategy, finally — administration of conquered lands. From the mass of critical remarks and apparently detailed suggestions concerning the reform of the State and contained in the three books of *The Amendment of the Commonwealth* there emerges a modern conception of state organization, a conception still appealing by its ethical values and its practical solutions.

After the first edition of *The Amendment* had appeared the leader of the Catholic party, Hosius, wrote indignantly: "Not only does this book sin against religion but also, whenever it discusses law and public morals, it insults our mother country and particularly the gentry, so

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<sup>31</sup> A. Frycz Modrzewski: *Dzieła wszystkie*, t. I: *O poprawie Rzeczypospolitej*, ks. II: *O prawach*, rozdz. III, 10, Warszawa 1953, p. 240.

its publication is shameful to our nation whose laws and customs it criticizes violently.”<sup>32</sup>

The principle of the same laws for the whole society was repeated after Modrzewski by Jakub Przyłuski, the author of a collection of laws<sup>33</sup> which was at the same time an exposition of political doctrine contained in his detailed commentaries. Przyłuski declared openly that it is the aim of the law “to preserve equality among citizens, for which it is essential that in relation to justice all should be levelled, so that a gentleman would be no more highly regarded than a servant, nor a wealthy man be any higher than a poor one.”<sup>34</sup>

Przyłuski, one of the leaders of the executive party, saw an escape for his country in the establishment of a national church with the sovereign as its head. This project was often suggested by dissidents “who wished in general that Poland might be like England where the king is the head and where no tithes are paid.”<sup>35</sup>

In Przyłuski’s conception the king becomes the main power unifying the State politically, culturally, administratively and religiously. It seems that in order to win over the ruling circles to the idea of strengthening the rule of the king and making him the head of a national church Przyłuski abandoned criticism of existing social relations. His attacks are made — both in their content and in their tone — within the limits set by the pronouncements of the Protestant reformers, who were annoyed above all by the rule of Rome in the Church.

A special kind of opposition against the existing organization was raised by the Arians, also called the Polish Brethren. Though they neither opposed nor attempted to change politico-legal institutions, yet forming their own communities as if on the margin of official life, they expressed their protest against the prevailing conditions through their highly ethical conduct. They were such a force — ethically and intel-

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<sup>32</sup> Stanislaus Hosius Martino Cromero, Decembris 7 Heilsbergae [in:] *Stanislaus Hosii . . . Epistolae tum etiam eius Orationes Legationes, Tomus II, 1551—1558, Acta Historica res gestas Poloniae illustrata ab anno 1507 ad annum 1795, Tomus IX, Cracoviae 1886, p. 475, No 1301:*

„[. . .] *Libellus is non modo peccat contra religionem, verum etiam ubi de moribus deque legibus tractat, in patriam nostram est contumeliosum, praecipue vero in ordinem equestrem, non sine magna nostrae gentis ignomia editus, cuius et mores et leges vehementer in eo perstringuntur. Vel hoc solo nomine posset ei non parum exiberi negotii*”.

<sup>33</sup> Jacobo Prilusio [Jakub Przyłuski]: *Leges seu Statuta ac Privilegia Regni Poloniae, Szczuczyn — Kraków 1553.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid., lib. I, Praefatio.*

<sup>35</sup> Quoted after L. Kubala: *Stanisław Orzechowski, Warszawa 1906, p. 68.*

lectually — that though they were few in number, they played an important role in the mental activities of the country and their writings, though forbidden, were sought for in the West, especially in Germany, France, Holland and England.

In the years 1562—1565 there was a split among the Polish Calvinists and a separate Arian church was established. It was a reaction against the contradictions existing between the cant of the gentry absorbed by politics and their public and private lives. The new sect formed separate communities whose religious teaching was considerably influenced by the social ideas of the Moravian Anabaptists and by the rationalism of the Italian Anti-Trinitarians.

The Polish Brethren preached an uncompromising adherence to the principles of Christian ethics in everyday life; they were convinced that the essence of religion is to be found not in obscure dogmas but in moral conduct, and consequently not the belief in dogmas but the way of living was for them a criterion of man's worth. They demanded the right of free, rational interpretation of the Scriptures and made the freedom of religion and of professing one's religious convictions the keystone of their teaching.

Against the background of the blind and fanatical religious struggles of those times the intellectualism of the Polish Brethren, their religious tolerance and their shift of emphasis from dogmatic clashes to ethical matters guaranteed to their teaching a special position in the history of political thought. Bearing in mind Christ's *Sermon on the Mount* they were thinking not of the happy life after death, but of a reform of temporal conditions. The *Sermon on the Mount* was the foundation of their campaign and a sacred commandment that they should work for social justice and constantly perfect their own personalities. Their radical leaders: Piotr of Goniądz, Grzegorz Paweł, Paweł of Wizna, Marcin Czechowic taught by word and by their writings that a true Christian must not hold any offices or go to war, that it is even unseemly if he reaches for a sword in his own defence, that he should have no property, let alone bondsmen and slaves.

The provost of Wilno, Rotundus, so described the Polish Brethren in a letter to cardinal Hosius written in September 1567: "I myself saw and read a little booklet printed at Grodno in Polish and containing such blasphemous statements about Jesus Christ which are impossible to surpass either in word or in thought. In the booklet they deny power to any institution, extol Christian liberty and establish community of all property; they likewise abolish all distinctions of estate both in Church and in State, so that there might be no difference between the

king and the people, between the sovereign and his subjects, between the gentry and the plebeians.”<sup>36</sup>

1572 offered a special opportunity for the coming forward of the radical section of the brotherhood; it was the year when the last of the Jagiellonians, Sigismund Augustus, died and the Senate fearing foreign intervention ordered all the gentry under arms. The Arian communities were at once roused to heated discussions of “the sword and the office”. Some of the Brethren advocated a compromise and were inclined to consider permissible participation in a defensive war, as well as holding such government offices which would not lead to ethical conflict. The radical Arians, however, professed the view that a true Christian must have no share in institutions that make use of force or violence, and thus insisted on the prohibition of participation in wars and a ban on holding offices. They declared that life in a true Christian community rests on the principles of evangelical ethics and hence the State must be regarded as a necessary evil. Grzegorz Paweł taught unequivocally: “The Christians were told to obey authority and to fear it, but not to exercise authority or carry out its orders when it sends someone to death or executes criminals. Such actions do not befit a Christian who ought to be charitable and forgive seventy-seven times, while those that are in power cannot be charitable, nor once forgive anyone, but must punish him according to his offense, for otherwise they would do injustice to the other party and not perform their duty properly.”<sup>37</sup>

The heart of the radical movement was at Raków (Racovia), the Arians' ideal city established in 1569 in the land of Sandomierz (Sandomir); this was to remain for several decades one of the liveliest centres of progressive thought in Europe.

The situation of the Polish Brethren was far from easy; their teaching constantly aroused opposition and repressions. At first they came under the attacks of the Calvinists to the satisfaction of the Catholics whose motto was then: “*Bellum haereticorum pax est Ecclesiae*”. The task of suppressing them was completed by the Polish Counter-reformation with the destruction of Raków in 1638 and, then, twenty-five years later, with the expulsion of the Polish Brethren from the country.

Much less original are the doctrines that have their roots in the established order, although they also reveal the polemical spirit which stems from topical and controversial character of the problems discussed. These doctrines adapted the medieval notions to new conditions in

<sup>36</sup> Quoted after S. Kot: *Ideologia polityczna i społeczna braci polskich, zwanych arianami*, Warszawa 1932, p. 20.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 40.

order to justify the thesis that stability of government and of social relations is connected with the privileged position of the Church in the State, and that the Catholic religion guarantees the gentry their rights and liberties. This thesis was to become in the future the main principle of the Counter-Reformation which identified the destiny of Poland with the position of the Church.

This particular point of view is expressed in a short treatise written by Stanisław Zaborowski and published in 1507 under the title *Tractatus de natura iurium et bonorum regis*...<sup>38</sup> The writing of the treatise was prompted by the policy of King Alexander who favoured the gentry. The author presents his arguments as if against the background of two bills recently passed: one concerning the necessity of the Diet's consent to the donation, sale or offering as security the royal estates, and the other —to its approval of new bills. Zaborowski justifies the gentry's share in government by their exclusive duty to defend the country. Only the gentry are the society, and the opinions of the gentry must be taken into account by the sovereign who manages the kingdom but is not its owner.

Going back to Cicero's idea the treatise advocates the subordination of individual interests and group interests to public good. The sovereign may justly confiscate a private estate and not be accused of robbery if public good requires it, or if by remaining in the hands of their owner they would do harm to the Commonwealth.<sup>39</sup> The bold declaration of the supremacy of public good was used by Zaborowski to justify the need for retrieving crown estates which were to fill the treasury without burdening the gentry with taxes.

Simultaneously he firmly declared that ecclesiastic estates were in-

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<sup>38</sup> *Tractatus de natura iurium et bonorum regis. Et de reformatione regni ac eius Reipublicae regimine. Quem in lucem edidit Stanislaus Zaborowski regni Poloniae thesauri notarius [in:] Starodawne prawa yolskiego pomniki, op. cit., vol. V, part I, pp. 17—91.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 78:

„Naturale enim est (ut inquit Aegidius in de regimine principum) partem se exponere periculo pro toto, ut braccium statim se exponit pro defensione corporis. Praeter ergo ordinem naturalem agit quilibet regnicola, maxime cuius interest, si non exponat se periculo pro defensione patriae, de qua ait Tullius in questionibus Tusculanis dicens: «Tanta caritas est patriae, ut eam non sensu nostro sed salute ipsius metiamur. Itaque non deterret sapientem mors, quae propter incertos casus quotidie imminet, propter brevitatem vitae nunquam potest longe abesse, quominus in omne tempus reipublicae suisque consulat et posteritatem ipsam, cuius sensum habiturus non sit, ad se putet pertinere etc.» Multo vero magis contra ordinem naturae et divinam legem agit, qui rem privatam non exponit pro republica...”

tangible. Cicero's idea did not apply to them, because Zaborowski professed the view that secular power should be subordinated to the Church and thus thought it inadmissible that ecclesiastical estates, destined for religious goals, should be used for temporal purposes.

The author argues that the internal purpose of the State is the suppression of heretics who are the greatest threat to society as a whole, while in foreign policy its aim is the undertaking of a national crusade against the Turks. Zaborowski finished his treatise with an appeal for such a crusade.

Another spokesman of traditional institutions and ecclesiastic rule in Poland was a man two generations younger than Zaborowski — Stanisław Orzechowski. A demagogic priest speaking in a pathetic manner, he came to be the principal ideologue of the gentry whose favour he could win by assuring them that they were the only free nation in the world, also the most chivalrous, and that their State was ideally organized.

The thirty-year-old Orzechowski became very popular after he started his career with two pamphlets: *The Loyal Subject* and *A Speech against the Turks*. In the former he branded the lawlessness of the rule of Queen Bona, the bribery of officials, the garrulity of the Diet and the oppression of the peasants. In the latter he appealed to the gentry to make a war against Turkey, a war that was prompted by Rome in order to divert attention from difficulties caused by the Reformation.

In Orzechowski's late writings there is a mixture of personal grievances, disappointments, and political matters. This was the result of his involvement in a conflict with Church hierarchy through a luckless marriage that he made despite his being an ordained priest.

Finally, in the last period of his life, when Orzechowski was already reconciled to Church hierarchy, he developed a theocratic conception of state organization in Poland and presented it in his three works: *Chimera*, *Quincunx* and *Dialogues*.

Orzechowski argues there that the State of Poland came into existence for the defence and glory of Catholicism, and that is why the highest rank in it is due to the clergy. The sovereign receives his power from the hands of a priest in order to defend the Church, religion and the country. A sovereign who fails in the performance of his duty may always be deprived of his power by the Church. Orzechowski distinguished two notions: a broader one — the kingdom, i. e. the country and Catholicism; and a narrower one — the Commonwealth by which he understood the society composed of the gentry and the king. The supreme power in the kingdom rests with the priest, while the king has supreme power in the Commonwealth. As the king reigns in the

Commonwealth, so a gentleman reign in his village and over his bondsmen.

In Orzechowski's conception of state organization Poland appeared as a federation of small estates belonging to the gentry and ruled despotically in contrast to the rights of the king who was merely to keep order and unity in the federation of the gentry. But the basic power integrating the state in Orzechowski's system is the Catholic Church.<sup>40</sup>

"If someone asked me now," wrote Orzechowski, "what is the kingdom of Poland? thus would I answer: the kingdom of Poland is the single state in Sarmatia, submitted by the priest to its own king, by God's grace freely elected, gifted with the altar of the Holy Cross, illumined divinely by the Christian faith and in one common apostolic Church contained and enclosed."<sup>41</sup>

Orzechowski's teaching is in its essence an adaptation of the medieval theocracy to the situation in Poland. His theories were to mould generations of the gentry educated by the Jesuits who made the Catholic orthodoxy and the gentry's liberty a political dogma.

In July 1572 Sigismund Augustus died and his death ended the rule of the Jagiellonian dynasty which had held the Polish throne for two centuries.

Feeling responsible for the destiny of the State the nation-gentry took up arms to repulse a possible intervention of foreign powers; at the same time they remained convinced that on the strength of a law from 1538 they should elect a new monarch. Thus came to nought the efforts of the reform party to replace a general election by the Diet's election of the king. Their only achievement was an assurance of tolerance during the 1573 session of the Diet; a resolution was then adopted to guarantee political rights to all religious denominations and to let each profess and teach its own religion.

The Catholic party, whose influence had clearly increased, meant to hand in the Polish throne to the uneducated but orthodox masses of the gentry which regarded the *viritim* election as an evidence of their rights and liberties.

The ideas sown by Orzechowski began to bear fruit. Under their influence the gentry began to lose their sense of reality; steeped in vanity they admired their model of State which to them represented the ideal. And thus did Jan Zamojski, the political leader of the gentry

<sup>40</sup> See Kubala: *op. cit.*, p. 73 et sqq.

<sup>41</sup> *Quincunx, to jest: wzór Korony Polskiej na cynku wystawiony, przez Stanisława Orzechowskiego Okszyca z przemyskiej ziemi i na kolędę postom koronnym do Warszawy na nowe lato roku pańskiego 1564 postany*, edited by K. J. Turowski, Kraków 1858, p. 40.



during the first election, speak to them: "None among us recognizes any authority if he had not earlier submitted to it voluntarily or if he did not at least vote while the majority chose another king [...] so free are we that neither the king nor any official has any power over us, save that which we ourselves gave them in agreement with public laws. According to our laws a commoner can have no office, neither can he hold any dignity. A well-born gentleman can aspire to all dignities, as he is also properly reared and has not in himself that foolish indiscretion and base humility that the common folk reveal [...]"<sup>42</sup>

When the European countries were growing in power as a result of a strong central rule, Poland was — owing to her political situation — advancing in the opposite direction.

### STRESZCZENIE

Dwuwiekowe bez mała panowanie dynastii Jagiellonów — to okres wielkich przemian w Polsce. Granica państwa przesunęła się wówczas daleko na wschód, co pociągnęło za sobą zmiany w składzie narodowościowym i religijnym ludności. W tym czasie staje się Polska głównym spichrzem zboża dla zachodniej Europy. Jednym z widocznych następstw ożywienia gospodarczego — zwłaszcza za panowania dwu ostatnich Jagiellonów — była zmiana sposobu życia szlachty, która rozszerza swe zainteresowania, kształcąc się nierzadko poza granicami kraju. Był to również okres wielkiej twórczości narodowej. W języku ojczystym powstawały wówczas arcydzieła literatury pięknej, a polska myśl polityczna cieszyła się uznaniem myślącej Europy.

W historii polskiej myśli politycznej czasów jagiellońskich można wyróżnić trzy podokresy.

Pierwszy podokres — to panowanie Władysława Jagielly, charakteryzujące się skoncentrowaniem zainteresowań politycznych na stosunku katolickiej Polski do Zakonu Krzyżackiego. Ówczesna polska doktryna polityczna, nowatorska w swym ujęciu problemu wojny sprawiedliwej oraz stosunku świata chrześcijańskiego do niewiernych ukształtowała się w polemice z poglądami Krzyżaków. Jej autorami byli Stanisław ze Skarbimierza i o kilka lat od niego młodszy Paweł Włodkowiec.

Drugi podokres — to rządy Kazimierza Jagiellończyka, który jest głównym rzecznikiem pełnej niezależności Polski zarówno wobec pa-

<sup>42</sup> *Mowa Zamojskiego za rodakiem [in:] Rajnolda Hejdensztejna, sekretarza królewskiego „Dzieje Polski” od śmierci Zygmunta Augusta do roku 1594. Książ XII.* Translated from Latin by M. Gliszczyński, with a biographical essay by W. Spasowicz, vol. I, Petersburg 1857, pp. 215—216.

piestwa, jak i cesarstwa. Polska myśl polityczna koncentrowała się wówczas przede wszystkim na problemach suwerenności państwa i jego centralnej władzy, co widoczne jest głównie w twórczości Jana Ostroroga: *Memoriał o urzędzeniu Rzeczypospolitej (Monumentum pro Reipublicae ordinatione)*, który ukazał się około r. 1475, oraz w późniejszych o 20 lat *Radach Kallimacha (Consilia Calimachi)*.

Trzeci podokres — to panowanie trzech ostatnich Jagiellonów. Myśl i praktyka polityczna zajmowały się wówczas naprawą ustroju, reformą Kościoła i sprawami społecznymi, wysuwanyymi przez arian.

W obszernej literaturze politycznej tego czasu można wyróżnić dwie tendencje. Jedną reprezentowali pisarze, którzy naprawę ustroju łączyli ze zmianą tradycyjnych instytucji religijnych i polityczno-prawnych. Drugą zaś reprezentowali obrońcy tradycyjnego porządku z uprzywilejowaną pozycją Kościoła.

Wśród pierwszych czołowe miejsce zajmuje Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski, Jakub Przyłuski oraz polscy arianie. Do drugich zaliczyć można Stanisława Zaborowskiego oraz głównego teoretyka konserwatywno-katolickiego obozu, Stanisława Orzechowskiego.

## РЕЗЮМЕ

Почти двухвековое господство династии Ягеллонов — это период больших перемен в Польше. Граница государства продвинулась тогда далеко на восток, что повлекло за собой изменения в национальном и религиозном составе населения. В это время Польша делается главным амбаром хлеба для западной Европы. Одним из заметных последствий хозяйственного оживления — особенно во время господства двух последних Ягайлов — было изменение образа жизни дворян, которые расширяют круг своих интересов, обучаясь нередко за границами государства. Это был также и период большого народного творчества. На родном языке создавались в то время шедевры художественной литературы, а польская политическая мысль пользовалась признанием мыслящей Европы.

В истории польской политической мысли ягеллоновских времен можно выделить три периода.

Первый период — это господство Владислава Ягайло, характеризующееся сконцентрированием политических интересов на отношении католической Польши к Тевтонскому ордену. Тогдашняя польская политическая доктрина, новаторски представляющая проблему справедливой войны и отношения христианского мира к неверным, сформировалась в полемике с взглядами крестоносцев. Её авторами

были Станислав из Скарбимежа и младший от него на несколько лет Павел Влодковиц.

Второй период — это господство Казимира Ягеллончика, являющегося главным поборником полной независимости Польши, как в отношении к папству, так и к империи. Польская политическая мысль концентрировалась в то время прежде всего на проблемах суверенитета государства и его центральной власти, что заметно, главным образом, в творчестве Яна Остроорога „Мемориал об устройстве Речи Посполитой” (*Monumentum pro Reipublicae ordinatione*), указавшемся около 1475 г., а также в „Радах Каллимаха” (*Consilia Calimachi*), вышедших 20 лет позднее.

Третий период — это господство трех последних Ягеллонов. Мысль и политическая практика занимались в то время исправлением строя, реформой церкви и общественными делами, выдвигаемыми арианами.

В обширной политической литературе того времени можно выделить две тенденции. Выразителями одной являются писатели, которые исправление строя соединяли с изменением традиционных религиозных и политически-правовых институтов. Выразителями второй — были защитники традиционного порядка с привилегированным положением Церкви.

Среди первых выдающееся место занимает Анджей Фрич Моджевски, Якуб Пжилуски и польские ариане. К другим можно причислить Станислава Заборовского и главного теоретика консервативно-католического лагеря, Станислава Ожеховского.

