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*Changes in the Natural Environment around the Wallachian Villages
on the Northern Slopes of the Carpathians in the 15th and 16th Centuries*

Zmiany środowiska przyrodniczego wokół wsi wołoskich na północnych stokach Karpat
w XV i XVI wieku

ABSTRACT

The problem of the impact of colonization on the natural environment in the 15th and 16th centuries has so far not been addressed by historians. Many publications were limited to only mentioning various symptoms of this phenomenon, without making efforts to analyse this phenomenon in more detail. This article aims at supplementing these inadequacies at least partially. There was a sudden demographic growth of the local population in the 16th century, manifested by the mass founding of new villages and the population growth in the older settlements. One of the consequences of this phenomenon was the limiting of pastoralism in favour of tillage. This activity resulted not only from the gradually shrinking grazing areas and their impoverishing, but also from the efforts of great landowners supporting the agriculture which was offering more profit. The aim of the article is to present in what way these processes influenced the local natural environment. Various historical sources from the 15th and 16th centuries (the nobility's inventories and surveys, location charters, entries in court documents) were used in order to present the changes in the forestation status, to indicate diverse factors influencing its reduction, and to address the problem of species' impoverishment of forest vegetation, wild game and degradation of natural mountain meadows. The efforts to limit the presence of some of these unfavourable phenomena were made, and the assessment of their application was made.

Keywords: changes in the forestation status; natural environment; Wallachian villages; pastoralism; agriculture

INTRODUCTION

The Wallachian colonization of the northern slopes of the Carpathian Mountains and their vicinities, initiated in the second half of the 14th century, reached the pinnacle of its development in the 16th century. The lack of possibility to implement a typically agricultural economy in these areas stemmed not only from the poor quality of soil, but mainly from a shorter period of plants' vegetation than in the lowlands. As a result, it was not profitable to use winter crops there, and without the harvest from this source, there were no options for balancing the food needs of the local population of typical farmers. For this reason, the agricultural model of the Wallachian colonization, linking the elements of agriculture, breeding, crafts and activities in forestry, was the only one to be applied in the mountains. According to the calculations made by Adam Fastnacht, among 156 settlements of the Wallachian law, which were in existence towards the end of the 16th century, there were as many as 131 (84%) which were established at the time the Land of Sanok, and only 25 (16%) can be dated back to the earlier, medieval period¹. Similar ratios in the development of the Wallachian colonization in the county of Stryi and Sambir (the Land of Przemyśl) was recorded by Wasyl F. Inkin². According to Władysław Bębynek, this ratio reached 100% in the county of Muszyna, in Lesser Poland³. The process of intensive colonization was accompanied by the phenomenon of the gradual change in the then profile of these villages. Pastoral activities were increasingly more limited in favour of primitive agriculture based on the two-field crop rotation system or even the shifting cultivation. These processes, well acknowledged in the scholarship on this topic, took place simultaneously on both slopes of the Carpathians, and the underlying reason behind them was the lack of possibility to support the increasingly numerous communities with the extensive pastoralism. This change was also fostered by the on-going economic conjuncture of grain prices and the ambitions of great landowners⁴.

¹ A. Fastnacht, *Osadnictwo ziemi sanockiej w latach 1340–1650*, Wrocław 1962, p. 267.

² W.F. Inkin, *Sil'ske suspilstvo Halyskoho Prykarpattya u XVI–XVIII stolittiyakh: istorychni narysy*, Lviv 2004, pp. 12–20. The proportion of the Wallachian villages established in the Eastern Bieszczady Mountains, founded usually in the sphere between 450 and 550 meters above sea level in modern time, was in the range of 80–90% in comparison with the older settlements.

³ W. Bębynek, *Starostwo muszyńskie. Własność biskupów krakowskich*, "Przewodnik Naukowy i Literacki. Dodatek do Gazety Lwowskiej" 1914, vol. 42, no. 1, pp. 116–125.

⁴ J. Macůrek, *Valaši v západních Karpatech v 15.–18. století*, Ostrava 1959, p. 37, 62; J. Štika, *Moravské Valašsko. Jeho vznik a vyvoj*, Ostrava 1973, pp. 20–21; D. Krandžalov, *Valaši na Moravě. Materiály, problémy, metody*, Praha 1963, pp. 73–75; F. Ulicný, *Zaciatky Rusínov na Slovensku*, [in:] *Počátky sásiedztva. Pogrnicze polsko-rusko-słowackie w średniowieczu. Materiały z konferencji, Rzeszów, 9–11 V 1995*, ed. M. Parczewski, Rzeszów 1996, p. 469; J. Beňko, *Osídlenie severného Slovenska*, Košice 1985, p. 71; W.F. Inkin, *Krestyanskiy obshchinnyy stroj v galitskom*

The problem indicated in the title of this article, i.e. of the impact the above-mentioned processes had on the natural environment has so far not received an in-depth historical analysis. There were no attempts to define the spheres and range of a man's influence on the surrounding world of forests, pastures, and wild mountain game in the period of the great colonization of the Carpathian Mountains. One of the obstacles a scholar working on this topic will encounter is the necessity of formulating the more generic findings, based on numerous excerpts in the sources, which concerned small territories only. The research results based on them are always subject to the risk of errors.

The inspections and inventories of individual counties from the 1560s are the major sources for the analysis. Particularly valuable is the text of the inspection carried out in 1564–1565 by Krzysztof Sokołowski, published by Michał Hruszewski⁵, including significantly more useful data in comparison with the text by Stanisław Dembiński⁶, and the inspection from 1570⁷. The inventory of the Sambir county made by Jan Zamoyski in 1568 has many interesting information. It has a painstakingly meticulous and accurate description. In addition, it includes the views of the young royal secretary and his suggestions on how to improve the situation he had encountered there⁸. The remaining sources used in the article are of various nature. These are the documents from the royal, county and private chancelleries, linked with the founding of the Wallachian villages in the

Prikarpatye (Opyt sravnitel'nogo izucheniya pozemelnykh soyuzov). Avtoreferat dissertatsii, Lvov 1978, p. 12, 17; K. Dobrowolski, *Migracje wołoskie na ziemiach polskich*, Lwów 1930, p. 8, 13; idem, *Studia nad kulturą pasterską w Karpatach północnych. Typologia wędrowek pasterskich od XIV–XX wieku*, "Wierchy" 1960, no. 29, pp. 1–19; S. Szczotka, *Studia z dziejów prawa wołoskiego w Polsce*, "Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne" 1949, no. 2, p. 361; F. Persowski, *Osady na prawie ruskim, polskim, niemieckim i wołoskim w ziemi lwowskiej. Studium z dziejów osadnictwa*, Lwów 1927, pp. 88–89; J. Reychman, *Zagadnienie osadnictwa wołoskiego w Karpatach w rumuńskiej literaturze naukowej lat ostatnich*, "Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych" 1939–1946, vol. 8, no. 2, p. 298; G. Jawor, *Ius Valachicum jako narzędzie kolonizacji obszarów peryferyjnych (na przykładzie pogranicza polsko-ruskiego w XIV–XVI wieku)*, [in:] *Materiały V Kongresu Mediewistów Polskich*, vol. 3: *Pogranicza w polskich badaniach mediewistycznych*, eds. A. Janeczek, M. Parczewski, M. Dzik, Rzeszów 2019, pp. 177–192.

⁵ *Orysy korolivshchyn v ruskykh zemlyakh XVI vika*, ed. M. Hrushevskyy, vol. 1–3, Lviv 1895–1900.

⁶ *Lustracja województw ruskiego, podolskiego i bełskiego 1564–1565*, eds. K. Chłapowski, H. Żytkowicz, vol. 1, Warszawa–Łódź 1992; *Lustracja województw ruskiego, podolskiego i bełskiego 1564–1565*, eds. K. Chłapowski, H. Żytkowicz, vol. 2, Warszawa 2001 [hereinafter: LWR].

⁷ *Lyustrtsyya korolivshchyn v ruskykh zemlyakh kopony z r. 1570*, ed. M. Hrushevskyy, Lviv 1903.

⁸ Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie (Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw; hereinafter: AGAD), Tak zwana Metryka Litewska (the so-called Lithuanian Register; hereinafter: TML), section IV B. fasc. 22: *Inwentarz pożytków starostwa samborskiego które się pokazały Roku MDLXVIII*. For more details on Zamoyski's mission to the county of Sambir, see G. Jawor, *Commentary by Jan Zamoyski, the Royal secretary, on legal customs of the Vlachs of Sambir from 1568*, "Analele Universitatii din Craiova – Seria Istorie" 2019, vol. 24, pp. 7–21.

15th and 16th centuries, as well as the inventories from the royal estates dating back to the end of the 15th century, court records or even narrative accounts. The gathered sources are a result of research carried out in the collections of Polish and Ukrainian archives; numerous sources had been published.

AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION IN THE MOUNTAIN AREAS

Agriculture existed in the Wallachian villages in the Polish territories already in its late medieval phase. The taxation universals of King Alexander I and Sigismund the Old regularly distinguished between the Vlachs-shepherds and the Vlachs who worked the land⁹. In later years, agrarianization became the common trend in the mountain villages. In the areas where it was possible to establish granges, the Wallachian custom was thoroughly eliminated. The inspection from 1564–1565 has many information on the efforts to force the Vlachs by individual county prefects to abandon pastoral activities and persuade them to pay rent (Pol. *pańszczyzna*) to the village owner, an act unknown to this legal custom. Pastures were measured and turned into arable fields, tributes in kind were eliminated, and the rent was introduced instead¹⁰. From the perspective of the royal court and great landowners, the satisfactory speed of founding the new settlements, even in the mountain areas where the grange economy was very limited, was how the success of colonization was measured. The inspectors agreed with these views. When describing the county of Halych, they lamented that there could have been many villages in the forests, just like in the counties of Sambir and Stryi, but it had been

⁹ *Corpus Iuris Polonici*, ed. O. Balzer, vol. 3, Warszawa 1906, p. 548: *Item Walachi ex singulis laneis integris, si illos habent, vel areis, quae dworzyszczu dicuntur, unum fertonem solvent. Et qui agros non habent, a singulo centenario ovium duodecim grossos persolvent.* Similarly: *ibidem*, p. 318, 351, 597, 653; *Corpus Iuris Polonici*, ed. O. Balzer, vol. 4, Kraków 1910, pp. 109–110, 144, 208, 548. The problem of the increase of agricultural activities in the Wallachian communities were discussed in detail by G. Jawor, *Osady prawa wołoskiego i ich mieszkańcy na Rusi Czerwonej w późnym średniowieczu*, Lublin 2000, pp. 165–170.

¹⁰ For example, the village of Turynka (Land of Lviv) was under the process of cancelling its previous legal and economic status at the time of making the inspection. The prefect, Stanisław Żółkiewski, “settled more people there, divided their fields and made a grange, while peasants were to pay their rents and work off their serfdom” (*Orisy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 3, pp. 395–396). Similar processes were taking place in the neighbouring Land of Belz, e.g. the royal Werechanie (Land of Belz): “At present the land was divided into fields, and farmers had to pay the rent like the Ruthenians, and work off two days of serfdom from half a field” (*ibidem*, p. 195, 199). All the citations from the sources, which were originally written in Polish, have been translated into English. This is to allow the reader from outside of Poland to understand their meaning. The translation required to have the grammar modernised and to change the numerous old-Polish archaic expressions into their more modern equivalents. The author took the greatest care to have the translated narratives as close to the original meaning as possible.

impossible due to the raids of the Tatars and Moldovans¹¹. The royal secretary, Jan Zamoyski, a keen observer of the situation in the county of Sambir¹², although his own inventory was in the already well-colonised area, indicated many times the places where new agricultural villages could be founded, and he even calculated how many peasants could live there¹³. He did not criticise the local prefects for issuing numerous permits to find new settlements, although he had no doubt that they were driven by their own personal benefits when making these decisions. He emphasized that the situation concerned primarily the money paid by the tenants for these permits¹⁴. According to him, the officials who gave permissions for founding new settlements often violated the interests of the neighbouring settlements: “[A new village was founded in such a way] that a peasant would go to starosta and ask him to allow him to settle a village by one of the streams. In return, he would pay several hundred or sometimes even one thousand zlotys to the magistrate. [While entering such a contract] he would at once reserve for himself [material remuneration of the knyaz’s lands] in a form of arable land, 1/3 of rents and tributes paid by the villagers, [right to build] windmills, etc. Starostas willingly agreed to such a contract because they did not rely on seeing rents and tributes paid by the residents of a newly-founded village since the period of a total exemption from payments lasted several years. Starostas immediately received the money without caring about the future”¹⁵. Zamoyski’s criticism of the prefects focused on the pointing out their greed, imprudent decisions, inattention to the development of the leased goods and their devastation. These were the constant accusations from the royal court, addressed throughout the 16th century¹⁶. Therefore, a question arises as to how this somewhat spontaneous process of

¹¹ *Orysy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 1, p. 96: “There are many places there to found new villages between the county of Dolyna and Halych, all the way to the Hungarian border, just like it had been done in the county of Stryi and Sambir”. Similarly: *ibidem*, p. 72 (county of Sniatyn): “There are also large beech and other forests, known as the Alpes, which stretch all the way to the Hungarian borders. It would be possible to found villages in these forests in accordance with the custom if the Lord had granted peace”.

¹² Between 1556 and 1568, the county was in the hands of as many as eight administrators and tenants. See A. Sucheni-Grabowska, *Monarchia dwu ostatnich Jagiellonów a ruch egzekucyjny*, part 1: *Geneza egzekucji dóbr*, Wrocław 1974, pp. 243–244.

¹³ AGAD, TML, IV B. fasc. 22, card 94: “It is possible to settle fifteen people there”, or card 91v: “[The prefect] should establish a village there, where 20 people could live”.

¹⁴ Such a normal permit cost in the 14th century from around 40 to 150 florins. See W.F. Inkin, *K voprosu o proiskhozhdenii i evolyutsii voloshskogo instita knyazya „knezya” v galitskoy derevne v XV–XVIII vv.*, [in:] *Slavyano-voloshskiye svyazi (sbornik statey)*, ed. N.A. Mokhov, Kishinev 1978, p. 119; S. Szczotka, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

¹⁵ AGAD, TML, IV B. fasc. 22, card 4.

¹⁶ A. Sucheni-Grabowska, *Odbudowa domeny królewskiej w Polsce 1504–1548*, Warszawa 2007, p. 198, 214–216.

enriching the settlement network influenced the natural environment, in which new settlements were founded.

The extensive source indicates how the imprudent founding of new settlements led not only to the deforestation of some areas, but also limited the possibility to carry out pastoralism, and even targeted the interests of the local royal salt mines. It is possible to mention here the example of ramifications that the founding of Wola Nanczułowa had. Zamoyski had nothing but criticism regarding this decision: “What a pity this village had been founded as it led to the destruction of forests necessary for building the castle and [firewood] for the salt mines”¹⁷. Similar initiatives also triggered the protests of the residents from the neighbouring Wallachian villages, rarely included in the sources. Such an incident took place in 1513. At the time, Fiodor from the village of Brzegi (Land of Przemyśl) sued the knyazes of the local villages for preventing the founding of a village *in cruda radice*, in the forest known as ‘Swynacz’ (Land of Sanok). The knyazes claimed that they owned pastures there¹⁸. An almost identical reason of the protest was given in 1521 in a note about the Land of Sambir: *universa bona regalia alias Krayna habent interesse ad dicta silvas pascendo peccora*¹⁹. In those circumstances, conflicts were created between the residents of the new village and their neighbours²⁰.

Alongside the new initiatives in founding settlements, the phenomenon of colonization was also taking place within the older Wallachian villages. Their demographically growing population forced them to till the new areas of meadows and forests, previously reserved for pastures. In contrast to other parts of the country, the phenomenon of the inside-village *lanei deserti* (Pol. *pustka osadnicza*) occurred very rarely in the mountain areas, which unmistakably proves the considerable need for the arable land²¹. According to the inventory from 1538, the only lands that were not tilled in the county of Sambir were those that were

¹⁷ AGAD, TML, IV B. fasc. 22, card 70v. Similar information on the destruction of forests: cards 34, 59v, 75, 92, 99, 113, 117v, 157, 164, 178 v.

¹⁸ Centralne Państwowe Archiwum Historyczne Ukrainy we Lwowie (Central National Historical Archives of Ukraine in Lviv), Księgi grodzkie przemyskie (Przemyśl Municipal Records), fond 13, description 1, case 4, cards 553–555. The village of Dźwiniacz Dolny was founded in this place only in 1541. See A. Fastnacht, *Słownik historyczno-geograficzny ziemi sanockiej w średniowieczu*, prepared for publishing by A. Fastnacht-Stupnicka, A. Gąsiorowski, vol. 1, Brzozów 1991, p. 118.

¹⁹ *Akta grodzkie i ziemskie z czasów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z archiwum tak zwanego bernardyńskiego we Lwowie*, eds. O. Pietruski, X. Liske, A. Prochaska, vol. 19, Lwów 1906, no. 3030.

²⁰ The inspection in 1564–1565 mentioned a new settlement of Wola Kobylnicka (county of Lubaczów). The residents of the neighbouring Kobylnica “forbade its residents to erect any buildings there” (*Orysy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 3, p. 290).

²¹ P. Guzowski, *Chłopi i pieniądze na przełomie średniowiecza i czasów nowożytnych*, Kraków 2008, p. 95. On a considerable spread of the non-colonized fields, see S. Mielczarski, J.R. Szaflik, *Zagadnienie łąk pustych w Polsce XV i XVI wieku*, “Studia i Materiały do Dziejów Wielkopolski i Pomorza” 1956, vol. 1, no. 2, p. 68; A. Wyczański, *Wieś polskiego Odrodzenia*, Warszawa

suitable neither for tillage, nor for pastures²². This vigorous agrarization within the boundaries of the villages and pastures, which were allocated to them, led over time to the founding of new, initially small, farms and then to the emergence of subsidiary settlements. This is illustrated by a few examples. The residents of the village of Odrzechowa, an old Wallachian village in the Land of Sanok, made use of the forest known as Mymoń as a pasture area. In 1572, the sources mention that the area was already used as plough land, and some buildings were also present²³. In 1572, the knyazes from that same village received from the king the charter to found the village of Puławy. They had had their pastures and beehives there earlier. In this case, the establishment of the new settlement was supported by the fact that the area was partly deforested by a Jewish man, Abraham of Rymanów, who, in 1570, received the royal privilege to build a blacksmith shop, the right to make charcoal in the forests of Odrzechowa and clear the area of three fields of arable land²⁴. The process of founding Ustrzyki Górne in Bieszczady Mountains was the same. Preparations for the founding of the village in the area within the neighbouring Stuposiany had started before 1529, since it was recorded at the time that *agros et prata extirpata (...) alias Czerthezy ville Stuposyan adiacentia*. The village of Ustrzyki was recorded in the sources only in 1580, among the settlements founded under the Wallachian law, which were left behind by Piotr Kmita and his wife Barbara²⁵. This model was constantly repeated in various mountain areas in the 16th century²⁶. Farmer searching for a new land would not look down even on the very poor mountain soils. They single-handedly burnt the mountain forests and turned them into fields, often having no agreement on the matter with the village's owner. Therefore, a separate category of population (Pol. *zarebownicy, pasiekarze*), which existed due to combining the limited cultivation with the mountain agriculture, emerged in the villages encompassed by the Wallachian law already in the 16th century. Over the following two centuries, its

1969, p. 137; W. Rusiński, „Pustki” – problem agrarny feudalnej Europy, “Roczniki Dziejów Społecznych i Gospodarczych” 1961, vol. 23, pp. 9–50.

²² AGAD, Archiwum Skarbu Koronnego (Crown Treasury Archives; hereinafter: ASK), section LVI, fasc. 251, card 12: *Agri deserti sunt lanei 9 de quibus nihil perceptum est ob eam causam quia ager est malus et non valet tantum pro pascendis boby kmethonibus*.

²³ A. Fastnacht, *Osadnictwo...*, pp. 151–152.

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 151.

²⁵ Eadem, *Słownik historyczno-geograficzny ziemi sanockiej w średniowieczu*, prepared for publishing by A. Fastnacht-Stupnicka, A. Gąsiorowski, vol. 3, Kraków 2002, p. 215.

²⁶ J. Gawron, *Locators of the Settlements under Wallachian Law in the Sambor Starosty in 15th and 16th c. Territorial, Ethnic and Social Origins*, “Balcanica Posnanensia. Acta et Studia” 2019, vol. 26, pp. 269–290.

significance was clearly growing²⁷. This was one more reason for the homogenous changes which took place in the natural landscape of the mountains.

RESULTS OF PASTURE EXPLOITATIONS

The pasture areas for the Wallachian herds, diminished by the founding of the new villages and granges, and the growth in the farming acreage in the older settlements, were situated on average within the distance of 10 kilometres from their permanent settlements but, in reality, they were located in a broad range between 2–3 up to 80 kilometres²⁸. These were both high-mountain and mid-forest natural meadows, but also forestry areas, often referred to in the sources as *ploniny* (montane meadow)²⁹. In contrast, wetlands were avoided due to the possibility of infecting animals with a parasite, a liver fluke³⁰. Transhumance pastoralism (migratory husbandry), based on seasonal (summer and winter) migrations of shepherd groups with their herds from the Wallachian settlement to pasture lands, where temporary shelters for animals known as ‘barracks’ (Pol. *koszary*) were established. In the summertime, the livestock grazed on the montane meadows, the natural forest glades and in the forests; in the wintertime, they were fed with mistletoe and branches of coniferous trees. According to ethnographic data, the preferred ones were spruce and fit in particular³¹.

²⁷ W.F. Inkin, *Silske suspiilstvo...*, pp. 31–34; J. Nalepa, „Zarębki” i „zarębnycy” a procesy osadnicze w Beskidach Zachodnich I na Podatrzcu, cz. 1, “Rocznik Orawski” 2003, vol. 4, pp. 7–22.

²⁸ V. Kubijovyč, *Pastýřský Život v Podkarpatské Rusi. Díl I – Text*, “Zemepisné Práce” 1935, vol. 8, pp. 60–61.

²⁹ In the description from 1538, the estates’ division between the family of Turecki and the royal meadows is *vastitates versus Bieszczad alias magnos montes dictos Ploniny* (Biblioteka Ukrainśkiej Akademii Nauk we Lwowie [Library of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences], fasc. 2837/III, card 32 ff.). Similar meaning is present in the inventory of the county of Sanok from 1523: *ad montes seu na plonyny* (AGAD, ASK, section I, fasc. 21, card 35). In turn, in the royal document from 1494, it is identified as pastures: *pascuis alias plonyny* (AGAD, Metryka Koronna [Royal Register; hereinafter: MK], fasc. 17, cards 60v–61). In contrast, Jan Długosz writing about the background of the family of Rybotycki, placed its original estates in the meadows which he identified with the mountain forests: *genus Valachicum, ex montibus et silvis provinciarum Russiae, qui Poloniny nuncupantur, ducens originem* ([Jan Długosz], *Insignia seu clenodia Regni Poloniae, [in:] Opera omnia...*, eds. J. Polkowski, Z. Pauli, vol. 1, Kraków 1887, p. 573). It can be assumed that the royal inspectors did distinguish the forested meadows from grasslands if, writing in 1565 about the county of Przemyśl, they stated that: “These are also the naked meadows in some place, where sometimes the fodder for sheep is good” (*Orysy korolívshchyn...*, vol. 2, p. 156).

³⁰ G. Jawor, *Kolonizacja wołoska na obszarach Wołynia w XV i XVI wieku*, “Rocznik Lubelski” 2018, vol. 44, pp. 17–18; J.T. Lubomirski, *Starostwo ratneńskie. Wyjątek z historii osad wołoskich w Polsce*, “Biblioteka Warszawska” 1855, vol. 2, pp. 222–223.

³¹ Detailed information on the topic of this type of breeding were presented by G. Jawor (*Udział mieszkańców wsi prawa wołoskiego w systemie egzekwowania prawa na obszarze Karpat polskich w XV i XVI wieku*, [in:] *Jednostka, rodzina i struktury społeczne w perspektywie historycznej. Księga*

The excessive exploitation of the pastures was a natural consequence of the shrinking of these areas, which resulted from the already-mentioned increase in the significance of the agriculture and the simultaneous demographic development of the local population of shepherds. As a result, the pastures were getting poorer or even completely devastated. The sources recorded the symptoms of this phenomenon even in the sparsely populated, highest-situated areas of the borderland between Poland and Hungary, owned by the royal domain. The areas were pastured not only by the flocks of the Vlachs who lived in the border counties, but also the shepherd-residents of the nobility's villages, after paying a special fee to the prefect (*starosta*)³². In the 16th century, herds of cattle also appeared in these areas, driven from Podolia via Sambir Lant to Sanok and Cracow, and from Hungary towards Przemyśl and Sandomierz³³. The state was not able to effectively control the scale of this phenomenon and collect suitable fees, and the badly protected border allowed the Vlachs from the Transcarpathia and Upper Hungary to continue illegal grazing, which was pointed out already in the inventory of the county of Sanok from 1523³⁴. In the case of the neighbouring county of Sambir, the impoverishment of the mountain pastures towards the end of the 16th century was the result of the decrease in the number of flocks and the forbearance of moving the sheep from the nobility's estates to these areas. The shepherds from the royal villages who were seeking for new areas, illegally crossed the border with Hungary, which threatened to have the animals confiscated by the local officials and triggered conflicts with the Polish prefects³⁵.

jubileuszowa dedykowana Profesorowi Cezaremu Kuklo, eds. P. Łozowski, R. Poniak, Białystok 2020). See also idem, *Le pastoralisme valaque dans les Carpates Polonaises au XV^{ème} et XVI^{ème} siècle (l'exemple de Bieszczady)*, "Banatica" 2014, vol. 24, no. 2, pp. 151–166; idem, *Vigesima agnorum et decima porcorum. Redevances pastorales dans les villages valaques en Pologne aux XV^e et XVI^e siècles*, "Banatica" 2018, vol. 28, pp. 465–479; idem, *Seasonal Pastoral Exploitation of Forests in the Area of Subcarpathia in the 15th and 16th Century*, "Balcanica Posnaniensia. Acta et Studia" 2016, vol. 23, pp. 175–186. Many examples of these types of grazing methods are provided by B. Kopczyńska-Jaworska, *Wędrowki pasterskie w Beskidzie Śląskim*, "Etnografia Polska" 1961, no. 5, p. 230.

³² Depending on the customs prevailing in individual counties and the results of negotiations with the arriving shepherds, its amount varied. See G. Jawor, *Seasonal Pastoral Exploitation...*, pp. 177–185.

³³ A. Fastnacht, *Osadnictwo...*, pp. 54–56.

³⁴ AGAD, ASK, section I, fasc. 21, card 35: *Sed multi nobiles et Ungari montos Regios occuparunt, quibus difficile est resistere ob magnam distanciam*. According to the inspection in 1570, some of the prefects from the borderlands treated the founding of the Wallachian villages right next to the state border as a means of strengthening their control over the areas. The village of Niebywałów (county of Halych) was founded "in order to have the robberies and thefts from the Hungarian borders stopped" (*Lyustrtsyya...*, p. 171).

³⁵ W.F. Inkin, *Silskie suspilstvo...*, p. 26. Cf. AGAD, TML, IV B. fasc. 22, card 124: "The border with Hungary is on top of the Beskidy Mountains, but it requires protection as Hungarians kidnap our sheep and people".

There is no doubt that the scale of these unfavourable phenomena for the Wallachian pastoralism was much more serious in the case when they were carried out in the areas with the dynamically growing network of new village settlements throughout the 16th century. The shrinking forest resources were not only subject to the pastoral exploitation, but they also met the heating and building needs of the residents of the neighbouring villages. The economic situation of goods produced as part of the forestry ‘industry’ was constantly growing, and the possibility to export some of the more valuable types of wood also emerged. These issues will be discussed more broadly below. At this point, however, it should be mentioned that the modest, or even archaic in the 16th century, pastoral levies paid to the great landowners ceased to be attractive and kept losing, particularly when confronted with the damage caused in the forests by the overly intensified grazing. While the grazing of sheep in the winter season required the cutting down of a huge number of spruce and fir, the summertime grazing distressed the condition of the forest’s groundcover and underbrush. First and foremost, the stripping of trees from their barks in order to feed the animals resulted in the withering of particularly the bigger and more precious trees³⁶. In contrast, the universally used in the mountain areas habit of burning the forests and transforming the conflagration into pastures or farmlands³⁷ meant a disaster for the local eco-systems. The analysis of the above-mentioned inventory from the county of Sambir from 1568 indicated a catastrophic condition of forests, which was the result of both their excessive deforestation for the needs of the newly founded villages, but also the intensity of grazing. The source usually refers to them succinctly as ‘desolate’³⁸. These changes were taking place fast. Thus, it was mentioned that in the recent past “the prefect received [from the forest of the already-mentioned Wola Nanczułowa] many rams and pigs as pastoral levies, the remaining things had to be carefully guarded, not allow for the further devastation of the forest”³⁹. In some other

³⁶ *Lyustrtsyya...*, s 247 (county of Drohobych): “Huge damage was done to them and the royal forests were destroyed due to the cutting down and disturbing the trees, *modernus capitaneus* prohibited it and forbade foreign people to enter the forests, only the king’s subjects were allowed to enter, despite the damages and devastation” and “(shepherds) who had their herds in the forests used to strip the bark from the trees to feed their animals, which caused the trees to dry out”.

³⁷ The technique of primitive mountain agriculture was based on stripping off the trees from their bark, which resulted in the trees drying out. Then, this area was burnt and sowed with spring crops, without using the plough. The forest oats, often mentioned among the Wallachian levies, came from such crops (W.F. Inkin, *Silske suspilstvo...*, pp. 32–33). This was a universal custom present also in Moldova also in the 18th century, from which the Wallachian colonisers came. See P.P. Byrnya, *Selskiye poseleniya Moldavii XV–XVII vv.*, Kishinev 1969, pp. 141–142.

³⁸ AGAD, TML, section IV B. fasc. 22, cards 59v, 70v, 75, 92, 99, 113, 117v, 178v.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, card 70v.

cases, when it was decided it was still possible to preserve the forests' value, a requirement was made to take remedial measures⁴⁰.

The decomposition of the grazing areas also stemmed from their poor supervision by the royal prefects. The ambition to obtain short-term profits resulted in letting in the shepherds from foreign areas to this territory, which took place against the residents' interests and sometimes triggered their effective protests⁴¹. In turn, the Vlachs were helpless when an area was usurped by one of the local noblemen. This way, the illegally set boundary cut off the shepherds from the mountain pastures⁴².

Efforts were made to limit the phenomenon of shrinking of the forest areas and their devastation towards the end of the 15th and the beginning of the 16th century by constantly reserving the right to use the forests only by the residents of specific villages (Pol. *gajenie, zapowiedzi*). The prefects had at their disposal some modest and ineffective means, with the help of which they could control the areas entrusted to them. Already in the 15th century, the duty to guard the estates' borders, looking after the royal forests, participating in the collection of pastoral levies, or even capturing criminal in the forests was universally carried out not only by the knyazes and Wallachian prefects (Pol. *krajnik*), as well as the simple residents of settlements founded under the Wallachian law. These duties were carried out compulsorily by people who were sometimes taken away from their own activities for a longer time. Characteristically, it often happened that people who violated the law in various ways came from the same villages as the Vlachs who collected taxes and guarded the pastures⁴³.

⁴⁰ In the vicinity of Jesionka: "The forests were useful everywhere for the pigs forage, but it was necessary to keep an eye on them because they were very damaged" (*ibidem*, card 113). In the vicinity of Jabłonów: "Although not good and damaged, the forest on the Wołcza hill can be restored". On the other hand, near Jabłonka Dubowa, "The forest in Dziarska is good, but it has to be taken care of" (*ibidem*, card 99).

⁴¹ For example, in the county of Zamch (voivodship of Belz), the shepherds from the Land of Belz and other areas moved their herds to the neighbouring forests. Pigs were also herded into the forests, for which the tribute in the form of a hog or ram (out of twenty animals of the given species) was offered (the so-called *dwudziesięczyna*) or tribute was paid in oats (*Orysy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 2, p. 221). This practice had stopped before 1565 as "the residents of the estates in Zamch suffer from lawlessness because for this reason, they are not able to maintain their own herds" (LWR, vol. 2, p. 226).

⁴² AGAD, TML, IV B. fasc. 22, card 164 – in the county of Sambir: "There were some forests left from Humaniec, but they were dug up. This was done by Mr. Tarło and this area is sown now".

⁴³ This issue was discussed in detail in the publication by G. Jawor, *Udział mieszkańców wsi prawa wołoskiego...*, pp. 69–76.

RAW MATERIALS AND FOREST GOODS IN THE SYSTEM OF THE WALLACHIAN OBLIGATIONS

The problem indicated in the subtitle of this article was never addressed in historians' in-depth research. Historians who work on the topic of the Wallachian colonization focused the most on the pastoral levies and their evolution, which were both the most characteristic for this settlement trend⁴⁴. Suffice it to say that the duty of supplying forests' natural products existed everywhere in various forms, and what requires a closer analysis are the consequences that the carrying out of this obligation had for the forests. The Vlachs from the settlement that were subject to the prefect of Przemyśl were obliged to provide shingles, ash for the sheet metal and float wood to the local sawmills as a form of levies⁴⁵. An enormous amount of wood was required by the breweries and salt mines for their functioning in the territories of the Crown Ruthenia. The inspectors pointed out to the lack of good quality wood in the regions where the salt-works operated and the devastation of forests as a result of the mines' presence⁴⁶. The obligation of supplying wood fell on the residents of both the Wallachian and Ruthenian villages. There is no doubt that the shortcomings of the good quality wood were one of the major reasons for limiting the high salt production by these salt mines⁴⁷. This increasingly scarce resource was searched for. The inspectors directly indicated the place, where this resource could be obtained⁴⁸. Apart from the obligations of the rural residents in the ratio of the used wood, one should also take into account the fuel and building material needs of the growing population, the selling of wood to the town residents and the export of this high-quality material which increased in the 16th century⁴⁹.

This was the way in which the change of the tree species typical of the individual forest complexes was taking place. In the first place, the most valuable energetically efficient oaks and beeches were cut down. Meanwhile, the fruit from

⁴⁴ Idem, *Vigesima agnorum...*, pp. 46–479. This is where a detailed discussion on the scholarship on this issue is presented.

⁴⁵ For example, the inspection from 1564–1565 mentioned that in terms of the residents of the Wallachian Starzawa “each peasant working on one field had to provide two half-measuring cups of ashes for tin, peasants from each field had to give two stacks of shingles, (...), and they also had to give one beam to the sawmill which was situated in Strwiąż in order to produce wooden boards” (*Orysy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 2, p. 142).

⁴⁶ In the county of Sambir, near the salt mine of Solec, “there is very little wood left there, more small and young bits than the valuable pieces” (*ibidem*, p. 11).

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 1–73.

⁴⁸ In the county of Drohobych: “The forests have not been exploited there, which can be well used for the salt mines” (*Orysy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 1, p. 214).

⁴⁹ The residents of the mountain villages paid for “the access to the royal forests for firewood, (...), and for building and for making vessels (barrels) by craftsmen, and for transporting wood to Przemyśl” (*Orysy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 2, p. 156).

these trees were the foundation for maintaining the herds of porcine species, the breeding of which was the basis for the Wallachian pastoralism, along with sheep and goats. Such grazing places were referred to using the old-Polish word *żer* or *żyr*⁵⁰. Therefore, the problem with the crisis of the Wallachian pastoralism was not only the consequence of the complete deforestation and using the logging areas for the new villages and farmlands, but also the species impoverishment of the preserved complexes. Some of the landowners were aware of this threat if, having given their consent to the founding of a new settlement, they saw the danger of depriving the foundations for the shepherds' existence by cutting these trees. For example, Piotr Kmita, who founded the settlement of Boberka (Land of Sanok) in 1537, allowed the settlers to deforest the area, except for cutting down the oaks and beeches, known as *arbori fructiferari*⁵¹. However, in accordance with the argument in the first part of the article, such efforts to reconcile the shepherds and farmers' interests were not frequent.

HUNTING AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

The Vlach's existence in the sparsely populated areas, which abounded in natural forests, and, in particular, carrying out in these places the semi-migratory pastoralism or cultivating fields in their immediate neighbourhood, had various consequences for these communities. On the one hand, the Wallachian flocks were constantly exposed to predator attacks, and the crops and forest beehives were damaged. On the other hand, successful hunts were a chance to acquire meat and precious furs, which could be used for their own needs or be sold. Limited information in the sources indicate some serious results of the fact that people and forest animals were living close to each other. According to the inspection in 1564–1565, the poor progress in developing the village of Solinka (Land of Sanok) was explained by a large number of bears in the neighbouring forests, which destroyed the residents' properties⁵². The information from the end of 1490 and the beginning of 1491 refers to a group of wild boars which caused damages to

⁵⁰ AGAD, MK 19, card 17 from 1501; AGAD, MK 20, card 44v from 1503: *glandium alias zyr pro pascendis porcis*.

⁵¹ A. Stadnicki, *O wsiach tak zwanych wołoskich na północnym stoku Karpat*, Lwów 1848 (introduction and documents), p. 29: *Ad latitudinem vero cmetones in eodem fluvio locati habebunt liberum usum fructum silvarum et pratorum diu laboratum ex utraque parti fluvii praefati proprius adjacentium sine destructione et annihilatione silvarum et arborum fructiferarum*.

⁵² *Orysy korolivshchyn...*, vol. 2, p. 287: "At present, this village has only two settled peasants and three knyazes. Even though it is a good place for founding a village, the forest is large and there are many bears, which destroy the property of people who settle there, and thus there are only few residents and little land was prepared for them for farming".

the Wallachian villages in the mountains⁵³. Some efforts were made to prevent this constant threat by applying passive means, i.e. guarding the flocks and farmlands by various methods⁵⁴. From the shepherds' perspective, the killing of animals was a much more effective method: in their opinion, this not only eliminated the 'pests', but also gave hope for additional benefits.

In the period in question, the royal hunting privileges belonged already to the past. The right to hunt became the prerogative of landowners. They could personally keep the prerogative or convey it, to a certain extent, to people living in individual estates. They usually aimed at maintaining the monopoly for hunting the large game to themselves⁵⁵. The analysis of the founding documents of the Wallachian villages from the territories of Lesser Poland and the Land of Sanok lead to the conclusion that the privileges offered to the village residents were much broader there than in other regions of Poland. In the document that belonged to Jan and Jakub Karwacjan from 1417 for the village of Rychwałd (today's Owczary), the local Vlachs were granted the law to hunt both the large game, e.g. roes, bears and wild boars, as well as small games, e.g. hares, pheasants (?) and martens. In the case of the former, the village owner was to be given one third of the animal. However, in the case of the smaller prey, the owners kept the right to pre-emption if the hunter wanted to sell it at the market⁵⁶. The privilege from the same year for the royal Ochotnica mentioned only the knyaz's rights to hunt for all the animals, in exchange for their fourth part, which was due to the king or the prefect of Czorsztyn⁵⁷. This custom had a broader scope since similar statements were also recorded in the foundation privilege of the settlement of Radoszyce (county of Sanok) from 1441⁵⁸. It is interesting that the identical rules

⁵³ *Spominki pilzneńskie 1486–1506*, ed. A. Bielowski, [in:] *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 3, Kraków 1878, p. 248.

⁵⁴ There is a toponym in the Bieszczady Mountains of the Wallachian origin, *caryna* (the Romanian *țarina*), which means 'farmland', guarded by the local population in the period of the crop vegetation. See P.P. Panaitescu, *Introducere la istoria culturii Românești*, București 1969, p. 89.

⁵⁵ W. Daniłowicz, *Prawo łowieckie*, Warszawa 2020, pp. 28–30.

⁵⁶ *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich*, ed. S. Kuraś, vol. 1, Wrocław 1962, no. 324: *dant et admittunt suis kmethonibus venacionem in campis et in silvis feras venari tali modo, quod cum parva animalia venabuntur per ipsos, videlicet lepores, aspergellos, mardures et vellent talia animalia seu feras ad forum deferre ad vendendum, prius debent accedere ad suos dominos et more fori ipsis vendere (...). Si autem maiora animalia venabunt, puta dorcas, ursuos, après silvestres, extunc predicti kmethones tenebuntur dare terciam dorcam, aut ursum, vel aprum suis dominis.*

⁵⁷ *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich*, eds. I. Sułkowska-Kuraś, S. Kuraś, vol. 6, Wrocław 1974, no. 1804: *Concedimus insuper sculteto eidem venandi et agitandi feras liberam facultatem in districtu villae praedictae Ochotnica tali condicione adhibita et adiecta, quod de quarta parte omnium venatorum nobis, vel capitaneo nostro Czorstinensi semper tenebitur respondere.*

⁵⁸ *Zbiór dokumentów małopolskich*, eds. I. Sułkowska-Kuraś, S. Kuraś, vol. 8, Wrocław 1975, no. 2327: *Concedimus etiam sculteto venandi et agitandi feras in districtu villae antefatae liberam*

were applied to the knyazes also in the following century⁵⁹. It is not clear how to interpret the fact that the discussed laws were completely omitted in the above-mentioned documents (except for one case) in relation to the rest of the village resident. It can only be assumed that if the knyazes were the ones hunting the wild boars and bears, other residents were left to hunt the smaller, less valuable animals. It also seems that there was no realistic opportunity to scrupulously control and execute the potential limitations in the environmental reality in the existence of the constantly migrating shepherds. It is difficult to accept that particularly the Vlachs were willing to apply any restrictions, who often arrived along their flocks from distant places only for the seasonal grazing in the large forest complexes. There is an interesting example of the existence of such a group, who came from an unknown direction and reached the foot of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains. There is a record in the Szydłowiec county inventory from 1533 about the village of Czyżewo, which does not exist any longer. There were large forests next to this settlement, where the Vlachs periodically took their sheep to graze, which generated the county a revenue of at least eight florins. Nevertheless, the Castellan of Cracow, Mikołaj Szydłowiecki, who died in 1532, had ousted them from the area due to the damages they made to the wild game⁶⁰. Even the inspection in 1564 pointed out to the lack of valuable species in this forest⁶¹.

The above-mentioned observations lead to the conclusion that the excessive exploitation of the grazing areas (forests in particular) led not only to the degradation of vegetation, but also, in some circumstances and as a result of too intensive hunts, could also contribute to the significant impoverishment of especially valued animal species living in the area. This phenomenon could have had a particularly intensive course in the territories exploited by the Vlachs. This group's motivation for this conduct was not only the willingness to protect the herds of livestock and farmlands, but also the considerable and additional benefits accrued from this activity.

facultatem tali condicione adhibita, et adiecta, quod de quarta parte omnium ferarum venatarum nobis, aut capitaneo nostro semper tenebitur respondere.

⁵⁹ In Bogusza situated in the county of Grybów, a record was made in 1544: *et in silvis supra dictis ad Bogusza spectantibus feras cuiuscumque generis venatu capiendi, ex quibus tenentario non plus quam cuiuslibet ursi seu apri silvestris unam quartam dare tenebuntur*. This privilege was similarly defined in the case of the knyazes from Bielczarów in the royal document from 1531. See A. Stadnicki, *op. cit.*, p. 84, 89.

⁶⁰ AGAD, ASK, section LVI, fasc. S. 6 II, card 22: *Circa hanc villam sunt nemora que Valachis pastoribus ovium appreciabantur florenis 8 et interdum pluris, sed dominus olim castellanus Cracoviensis, propter feras eos inde depullit, et nichilominus dicunt neque feras ibi esse.*

⁶¹ *Lustracja województwa sandomierskiego 1564–1565*, ed. W. Ochmański, Wrocław 1963, p. 152: "There are ordinary and quite large forests there where the animals had lived, but now one can find a roe deer only".

CONCLUSIONS

The arguments presented in the article come to an end and thus it is time to present a few remarks of a more general character. There is no doubt that the consequence of the population growth in some of the regions included in the Wallachian colonization, and the simultaneous increase of agricultural activities in their economy, was the impoverishment, and in some other cases, the deep degradation of the natural environment. The symptoms of this process, visible particularly in the 16th-century sources, refer not only to the reduction of the extent of forests and meadows, but also to their excessive exploitation and impoverishment of the impoverishment of vegetation which was present there. The then observers of these events and authors of the inspections or the royal estates' inventories noticed these processes, and often directly criticized the local officials' decisions which had led to such state of affairs. However, being guided by the utilitarian approach to natural resources, they could not stop this process. Their pleas to limit the exploitation of forests by limiting access to them were of little. The opinion which dominated at the time was that the progress in the rural areas meant that the new rural villages, granges and development of the older settlements had to take place. The shepherds, along with their herds, who were pushed to the increasingly more limited areas within a territory, did exploit them in an excessive way, which quickly resulted in a crisis of this type of economy and somewhat forced them to make a decision of undertaking agricultural activities. However, in the face of poor mountain soils and climate conditions, this activity did not promise great harvest. Thus, the Polish mountains became the area populated by the communities whose shared factor was dearth, passed from generation to generation, then poverty and often even destitution.

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ABSTRAKT

Problem wpływu kolonizacji gór na środowisko przyrodnicze w badanym odcinku czasowym nie spotkał się dotąd ze szczególnym zainteresowaniem historyków. W licznych pracach ograniczono się do odnotowania występowania różnych symptomów tego zjawiska, nie podejmując próby jego dokładniejszej analizy. Prezentowany tekst ma na celu przynajmniej w części uzupełnić te niedostatki. W XVI wieku na północnych stokach Karpat nastąpił gwałtowny wzrost demograficzny miejscowej populacji, manifestujący się masową lokacją nowych wsi i wzrostem ludnościowym starszych osad. Jedną z konsekwencji tego zjawiska było ograniczanie pasterstwa na rzecz uprawy

roli. Takie postępowanie wynikało nie tylko z kurczących się stopniowo terenów wypasowych i ich ubożenia, ale też z zabiegów wielkich właścicieli ziemskich, wspierających przynoszące większe zyski rolnictwo. Celem artykułu jest ukazanie, w jaki sposób te procesy oddziaływały na lokalne środowisko przyrodnicze. Na podstawie różnorodnych źródeł historycznych pochodzących z XV i XVI wieku (inwentarze i lustracje dóbr szlacheckich, przywileje lokacyjne, zapisy w księgach sądowych) ukazano zmiany stanu zalesienia, wskazano na różnorodne czynniki wpływające na jego redukcję, podjęto problem gatunkowego ubożenia roślinności lasów i dzikiej zwierzyny oraz degradacji naturalnych łąk górskich, a także wskazano na próby ograniczenia występowania tych niekorzystnych zjawisk i dokonano oceny skuteczności ich stosowania.

Słowa kluczowe: zmiany stanu zalesienia; środowisko przyrodnicze; wsi wołoskie; pasterstwo; rolnictwo

