

Aneta Pieniądz, *Tradycja i władza. Królestwo Włoch pod panowaniem Karolingów, 774-875*, Wrocław 2007, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, pp. 503, Monografie Fundacji na Rzecz Nauki Polskiej

Aneta Pieniądz studied history under Karol Modzelewski. She is already known among Polish students of the Middle Ages as the author of several valuable articles. All of them concern, as does her monograph, (which is a modified version — but we do not know to what extent — of her doctoral dissertation defended at the University of Warsaw in 2004) social and political history of Italy in the early Middle Ages. While her earlier texts (but not all of them) were concerned mainly with the reign of the Lombard rulers (568–774), the monograph under review deals with the next century — one in which Lombard Italy came under the rule of the Frankish Empire, without, however, losing its autonomy. If the history of an independent kingdom of Lombardy has attracted limited interest of Polish historians — to put it mildly — then the period of Carolingian rule in Italy remains completely unexplored. This, in some measure, as Pieniądz remarks in the preface to her book, also needs to be put down to Italian historiography's long reluctance to take a more genuine interest in this, considered as a colourless — and rather unrelated both to earlier Roman greatness and to later communal achievements — period of the history of the Italian Peninsula. At the same time, it needs to be stressed that Pieniądz quite often, but always in a way relevant to the main argument, ranges far back into the earlier era — that of an independent kingdom. The period that follows Carolingian rule in Italy is also touched on in the book — although in a lesser (but not less significant) degree.

As far as Polish historiography is concerned, Pieniądz ventures into unexplored and virgin territory.¹ Only gradually is this territory drawing the attention of historians from other countries (Italy in the first place) finally able to examine it in a way unencumbered by extra-scholarly factors. Pieniądz presents the Polish reader with an almost unknown page in the history of the Middle Ages and the way she does it — apart from embodying the tradition of excellent scholarship — shows her outstanding scholarly talent, accompanied by a great erudition and scholarly acribia.

¹ The work by Jakub Kujawiński, 'Strategie budowania tożsamości zbiorowych wśród Longobardów z Italii Południowej (VIII–XI w.)', *Scripta Minora*, 4, 2006, pp. 7–198, published at about the same time as the publication reviewed here indicates a change occurring in this regard.

The structure of the work is simple and clear, logically proceeding from the conception set out with sufficient clarity in the preface. Leaving the 'preface' (pp. 7–37) — including the discussion of primary sources — and concise conclusions (pp. 445–48) aside, the work is divided into three chapters. The discussion of primary sources mentioned above leaves one with no doubt that Pieniędz is a competent scholar. It also reveals a great abundance (albeit 'afflicted' with some disproportions) of the early medieval sources to be found in Italy (especially in comparison with the situation in Poland), and — consequently and quite unexpectedly — a huge amount of work still waiting to be done by historians, especially in Italy in collecting and publishing these materials. Chapters 1–3, offering a detailed analysis, form the essential part of the work. They are devoted to three aspects of the history of the post-Lombard Italy in the ninth century. The first deals with 'political and ideological foundations of Carolingian rule in Italy'. Pieniędz begins with the account of the final years of an independent kingdom and then turns to discuss the reign of successive Carolingian rulers — Charles the Great, Pépin Carloman, Bernard, Lothar and Louis II. In the second chapter, Carolingian rule over the Italian Peninsula is approached from the angle of the history of the administration of the country. Pieniędz is particularly interested in the origin and evolution of a typically Lombard institution of the *gastaldi*. However, lower offices, on which the evidence is not so abundant, also are not left out of her account. While the focus in the first two chapters is on the analysis of political and administrative aspects of the history of ninth-century Italy, in the third one it shifts on an important social issue. Most strictly linked to the major theme of the whole monograph, the issue concerns 'a bond of personal dependence' in Lombard and Carolingian Italy. The work closes with 'conclusions', a list of abbreviations, an extensive bibliography divided into primary sources and secondary literature, English summary, and index.

The work's most important finding — probably not only in my opinion — lies in demonstrating that after the fall of an independent kingdom, its political, legal and social structures continued to exist to a much greater degree than has so far been assumed. Repeatedly emphasized by Pieniędz, this central thesis appears to be well-documented. Both Charles the Great and his Italian successors were concerned about cementing their legitimacy as rulers and realized that in the pursuit of this goal Lombard traditions had to be reckoned with (inasmuch, of course, as the cultivation of these traditions entailed no threat to their power). This applied both to some symbolic actions which, especially in the case of the conquered people, bore some significance (the crowning of a new ruler with the crown of Lombard kings, the maintaining of Pavia's status as capital of the country or the sustaining of the belief, at least for some time, that the union was only personal) as well as to a variety of other decisions made by Carolingian rulers. The conduct of such a cautious policy was not futile. A considerable part of political elites of the conquered kingdom was won over for new rule and managed to adapt themselves to the new circumstances. However, concealed by the appearance of autonomy was a tough reality. Following the reign of Charles the Great,

Italian rulers were fully dependent on the supreme king. Against this background Pieniędz analyses later crises and struggles through the prism of which one can discern political ambitions of Italian rulers and Italian elites who, in trying to fulfill those ambitions — with varying (but always limited) success — sometimes decided to draw on the tradition of Lombard kingdom and sometimes turned away from it. Contrary to common belief, Lombard administrative system proved vigorous and efficient and — undergoing some necessary modifications — was not only adopted but survived in some important aspects until the end of Carolingian rule. In fact, one needs — in line with the opinion expressed by Pieniędz — to speak about a mixed (Lombard-Frankish) system brought into being in Italy in the wake of its conquest by Franks. The strength and attractiveness of some of its elements, along with the advantages it had for rulers, are attested to by a weak and rather late adoption of the Frankish institution of vassalage tied up with *beneficium*, despite royal authority's obvious interest in the transformation of the earlier kinds of loose bond with which it was connected to elites into a much stricter vassal relationship. Perhaps, as Pieniędz probably rightly suggests, the fact that the authority in Italy did not apply much pressure in trying to promote vassalage may have originated in a relative weakness of Italian aristocracy. Moreover, in Italy vassalage was not connected to the benefice system as strictly as elsewhere. Probably it is for this reason that in Carolingian Italy the power structures never went through the process of feudalization ('appropriation') so typical of the Frankish state. In political terms the Frankish conquest certainly marked a breakthrough, but 'it entailed neither deep institutional changes nor any social turbulence, though undoubtedly contributing to the intensification of the processes that had been begun to unfold still in the Lombard times' (p. 445).

Aneta Pieniędz's work is a great scholarly achievement and a significant contribution to world historiography. As such it deserves to be published in a non-Polish version (seven-and-half pages summary in English can provide those who do not read Polish only with a general idea of the book's content). The work also needs to be praised for the clarity of its narrative — rich in content and splendid in form. In addition to evincing scholarly maturity, Pieniędz also shows much tact in formulating opinions different from those expressed by some of the leading authorities in the field. The work's documentation is exemplary — exhaustive but not overloaded. And given the method employed by the author and the way in which she develops her argument — the work, although it is addressed to historians, can also serve as a methodical model for students and young scholars.

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Gary Macy, *The Hidden History of Women's Ordination. Female Clergy in the Medieval West*, Oxford, 2008, Oxford University Press, pp. 260

One needs to start with a word of explanation. Contrary to what the title phrase 'the hidden history' — commonly found in a variety of sensationalist publications — may suggest, this review concerns a scholarly work containing critical apparatus and published by a prestigious academic publisher. The work's main focus is on the question of female ordination in the early Middle Ages and on the process that led to the exclusion of women from the ordained ministry. However, one must say that it concerns itself to the same degree with different ways of understanding the term 'ordination' before and after the Gregorian reform.

The work deals with a problem in the history of the Church that strongly resonates with present-day theological debates. Fully aware of this fact, Gary Macy tries to keep historical and theological aspects of the problem apart. His aim, he says, is to answer the question of what it was like and not what it should be like now. He declares that he is not going to turn to the past for arguments to be used in the current discussion concerning the ordination of women.

However, the approach he declares often differs from the one he actually takes; it is not always possible to say that he succeeds in developing his argument *sine ira et studio*. Obviously, the eagerness with which he tries to prove that women were ordained to hold various ecclesiastical positions weighs heavily upon the whole work and leads Macy to offer interpretations that leave much to be desired. For example, he tries to show that women were allowed to participate in the performance of episcopal service. However, in referring to women bestowed with the title '*episcopa*', he offers examples which concern either the bishop's wife or the bishop's widow, or — as in two cases — relate to unclear situations. It is hard to consider, as does Macy (p. 54), the scenes from the Celtic Life of St Bridget to be evidence of the elevation of women to the position of bishop. The Life of St Bridget depicts the ordination of the Irish saint by a bishop who, acting under divine influence, temporarily lost his own mental faculties. The hagiographer undoubtedly aimed to show an unusual situation: the extraordinary grace which God bestowed on St Bridget, along with His omnipotence clearly seen in the appointment of a female bishop. Whether such misinterpretations result from the assumptions underlying the work of a historian trying to prove his thesis, or that of a theologian searching for arguments in support of the adoption of a specific solution by the contemporary Church, is of secondary significance.

The book is divided into five chapters, the last of which offers detailed conclusions. It also contains two useful appendices, bringing together a variety of liturgical texts concerning the ordination of deaconesses and abbesses which have hitherto remained scattered. The first chapter provides a panoramic view of the present state of the discussion, including both its theological and historical aspects. This valuable account of the history of the controversy, covering the period from the first Bollandists to the present day, and taking into consid-

eration the most recent publications, devotes much space to the problem central to Macy's work, that is, the understanding of the term 'ordination'.

This problem is dealt with in the second chapter. Drawing on existing scholarship, Macy shows the way in which the term was understood in the early history of the Church differs from the way in which it came to be understood from the eleventh century onwards. He argues that in early medieval Christianity ordination was staged to celebrate designation to a particular post in the Church, including those unconnected with altar service. It is characteristic that such concepts as *ordinare*, *consacrare* and *benedicere* were often used interchangeably. In this sense consecrated widows or virgins were also regarded — just like acolytes, ostiaries, exorcists, abbots or kings — as having been ordained.

However, in the eleventh century there began to crystalize a new understanding of *ordinatio* which can be considered to have acquired the meaning of 'ordination', for it referred to the power vested in the priesthood and implied the ability to perform transubstantiation. Those who promoted this new understanding of the term were becoming increasingly aware of the fact that ordination proper applied to only three higher orders of the priesthood: deacon, presbyters and bishops. Everything else could be regarded as a blessing, the imposition of hands, but not as an ordination. Even a deacon could actually be considered ordained only in so far as his *ordo* was a step towards the priesthood proper and towards the performance of the priest's service.

Where does this stand relative to the female question? The eleventh and twelfth centuries, along with a shift in the meaning of ordination, gave rise to the belief that women not only could not be ordained but were also incapable of accepting ordination, while in the pre-Gregorian Church, says Macy, women actually were ordained, although ordination had a different meaning. This view appears to be correct and the analysis demonstrating that ordination was understood differently before and after the Gregorian reform needs to be recognized as the best part of the whole book. However, some serious doubts have to be raised. In dealing with the earlier period, Macy tries to prove that such concepts as *ordinatio* or *benedictio* were used interchangeably and here his line of argument is quite convincing. But there is a tendency to be discerned in the examples he offers. Where reference is made to a priest, lector, abbot, or abbess, there usually appears the word *ordinatio*. Where a virgin or widow is concerned, the word used is rather *benedictio* or *consecratio*. This tendency is in itself significant and it remains unnoticed in Macy's discussion of various *ordines*.

This part of the work also seems to suffer from a serious shortcoming: it leaves completely untouched the question of anointing. True, anointing came to be part of the rite of consecration in the eighth century, which is relatively late. However, it needs to be regarded as quite significant that in the period that was still so far removed from the era of the Gregorian reform, unction was the honour reserved only for (setting rulers aside) presbyters and bishops, thus excluding deacons and other lower *ordines*, let alone widows or virgins

(some sources of English provenance which mention the anointing of deacons are an exception). What is more, the anointing of the hands of newly ordained priests was unequivocally combined with the power to confect the Eucharist. This is important to the extent that it allows us to understand the hierarchy of ordination in the early Middle Ages, and in some measure it also seems to call into question the interpretation put forward by Macy. The fact that the ordination ceremony performed with chrism began to be distinguished from that performed without it appears to indicate that the act of ordaining a priest or a bishop was considered to be essentially different from all the other forms of the ordination ritual. This is of course significant in the context of the main topic of the work. For the first kind of ordination, that applying to bishops and priests, seems to have remained — there is no evidence to suggest otherwise — inaccessible to women.

Another chapter deals with specific positions occupied by women in the pre-Gregorian Catholic Church. Macy discusses the offices of *episcopa*, *presbytera*, deaconess and — somewhat separately — abbess. As far as the first two are concerned, he succeeds in providing evidence for the existence of these titles in the early medieval Church. With regard to *episcopa*, all evidence suggests, as has already been mentioned, that it simply denoted a bishop's wife. Macy also fails to provide convincing evidence that the title of *presbytera* was conferred on women who performed some priestly service. The title was used in reference to priests' wives or some distinguished widows, perhaps widows of priests. Sometimes it happened that they were — just like deaconesses (understood here as deacons' wives) — ordained on the same day as their husbands and were in some way involved in the performance of altar service, which sparked violent protests from some Church councils. Undoubtedly, the material gathered by Macy is a valuable contribution to our knowledge of the role of the wives of priests and deacons in the Catholic Church, including their liturgical service. However, the evidence that survives is too scarce and flimsy to claim that until the end of the eleven century 'Some women did minister at the altar as priests' (p. 65).

Things look different with deaconesses and abbesses, since there is ample evidence of the performance of these functions by women. The arguments offered in support of the view that the title deaconess was not limited only to a deacon's wife are much stronger than those offered with regard to *presbytera*. Above all, we have strong evidence in the form of separate *ordines*, although those for a deaconess resemble at many points the *ordo* for virgins rather than deacons. There are reasons to believe that deaconesses and abbesses exercised liturgical functions, although the range of those functions remains open to debate.

The problem is that Macy, while focusing his attention on the ordination of women, leaves basically untouched the issue of their status as members of the clergy, in spite of the fact that, as the subtitle clearly suggests, this is supposed to be one of the work's main topics. He never explains the criteria that allow him to include women of the pre-Gregorian era among the members of the clergy. Moreover, such an inclusion is far from obvious as he himself —

quite paradoxically — proves. In the second chapter, he makes a great effort to show that the post-Gregorian division between the clergy and the laity can hardly be applied to the pre-Gregorian period. This view, in turn, implies that in dealing with this early phase in the history of the Church, one is required to precisely define the term ‘clergy’. Macy offers no such definition. Consequently, it is hard to say what Macy means by ‘female clergy’.

Similar doubts can be raised with regard to the fact that he confines himself only to a discussion of the ordination of abbesses and deaconesses. Why does he omit from his analysis the ordination of consecrated widows or virgins, if, as he claims, the belief that they need to be regarded as lay members of the Christian community was produced only by Gregorian reformers? As a result, in the selection of the material to be analysed in his work, Macy follows present or post-Gregorian criteria to denote a member of the clergy. And yet these are the very same criteria he clearly tries to distance himself from. Of course, he explains that his concern is exclusively with the positions which, although initially held also by women, became accessible only to men, as well as with the gradual exclusion of women (the problem dealt with in the fourth chapter) from these positions during the Gregorian reform. However, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the selection of the source material by Macy is not only inconsistent but also arbitrary.

It seems that he also exaggerates the scale of the change brought about by the Gregorian reform, thus demonizing it. For example, he writes about two visions of the Church. In his opinion the vision of the Church as a monastery was one that prevailed in the period of the Gregorian reform, while that striving for its legitimacy in the pre-Gregorian era promoted a model of the Church in which many Church functions were to be performed ‘on a family level’. This last vision was supposed to appreciate marriage and the role it was supposed to play (p. 79). Although it is possible to offer a number of examples of such a ‘family Church’ in operation, with some Church functions passing from father to son, one is tempted to ask Macy about the theoretical foundations of such a vision. It should be said that it would be difficult to find theologians — including pre-Gregorian ones — who actually attached a great importance to marriage and especially claimed that priests’ marriages should be regarded as having a very important role to play.

Gregorian ideas that penetrated Canon law, says Macy elsewhere, are to blame for creating an image of women as intellectually inferior to men, not much different from children and dependent on the help of others (p. 119). Undoubtedly, it was the revival of Aristotelian philosophy that had a hand in fostering such an image of women. However, it is open to debate whether this revival can be linked to the Gregorian reform movement. How can one explain the fact that only canonists of the post-Gregorian era considered a woman’s consent to her marriage to be of crucial importance, in contrast to an earlier period when it was considered sufficient to obtain the consent of her family? Under German laws, for example, a women — just like a child — had to remain

all the time in someone's care. Contrary to the opinion expressed by Macy, the view of a women's intellectual dependence was not born in the Gregorian era. Not only was it deeply rooted in German tradition but it can also be found in the thought of the Church Fathers and other Christian writers long before the Gregorian period.

As the remarks made above clearly indicate, Gary Macy's work arouses mixed feelings. Certainly, it is a valuable introduction to the problem of understanding the term ordination in the early medieval Church and of the changes brought about by the Gregorian reform. It also raises an important, if little known, question concerning the functions performed by women in the Church in the early Middle Ages, bringing together scattered and sometimes vague sources. Nonetheless, the view that women were ordained not only in a pre-Gregorian but also in a post-Gregorian sense of ordination — performing priestly services as full members of the clergy — hangs heavily on the whole work. The inadequate application of the post-Gregorian understanding of ordination to the pre-Gregorian period and the acceptance of a strong thesis — apparently connected with Macy's own worldview — deeply affects the interpretation of the sources and appears to be the work's greatest weakness.

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Walter Leitsch, *Das Leben am Hof König Sigismunds III. von Polen*, 4 vols, Vienna and Kraków, 2009, Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Polnische Akademie der Wissenschaften und Künste, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, pp. 2861

Walter Leitsch lived just long enough to see the publication of his monumental study on the court of King Sigismund III (r. 1587–1632). The Austrian scholar spent many years, beginning in 1970, working in European archives and libraries gathering material to illustrate the culture and workings of Sigismund's court. As a result Leitsch has produced a work which can be viewed as his *opus magnum*. It explores all the important aspects of court life during the reign of Poland's first Vasa king. The work has an interdisciplinary character, and Leitsch appears to be as competent in discussing political history as he is in dealing with the problems of the history of art, or of material culture.

The book is divided into ten parts, each of which touches on a different problem closely connected with Sigismund III's court. The first part raises the question of the material basis on which the court depended. Here the author aims to survey the King's income, as well as the financial positions of his two wives and other members of the royal family. In addressing this issue, he fo-

cuses his attention specifically on the years 1622–29, since it is with regard to this period that historical evidence is particularly abundant.

The second part deals with the people who made up the court, with the arrangement of particular chapters reflecting the position they occupied in the court hierarchy. As such, the author begins his analysis with ministers and high ranking dignitaries — both Crown and Lithuanian — and completes it with the kitchen boys and grooms. In addition, he includes the King's secretaries and the courts of both Queens.

The third part presents the person of King Sigismund III. Its chapters show the monarch as a politician, his relations with the nobles, foreign policy, nominations to public office, the distribution of crown estates (*królewszczyzny*) among the realm's subjects, and questions of religious toleration. The author also deals with the King's relationship with his family, his lifestyle and religiosity, and his attitudes to art and learning, his illnesses and death.

The next part depicts the royal family. Separate chapters present the King's sister Anna, his two Habsburg wives, Anna and Constance, the children Sigismund had by both of his wives, and his mother-in-law Mary, Archduchess of Styria. However, he omits Sigismund's aunt Anna Jagiellon, the Queen of Poland and the widow of King Stephen Báthory. Leitsch presents interesting details concerning the life of Anna, the king's sister, including plans for her marriage. The chapter dealing with the Archduchess Mary also offers some new information. However, in general there is little new to be found in those parts of the work devoted to the King's children. I shall have more to say about the fifth part of the book later. The sixth part deals with the food and drink served at Sigismund III's court.

The next part concerns the artistic and material cultures of the court. The author discusses the wardrobes of the King and Queens and the royal beds and bed linen, and depicts the interiors of the royal castle. There is also information about objects kept outside the royal residence. His interest here lies in means of transportation such as coaches, wagons, sedan chairs, sledges, boats, as well as in horse harnesses, pillows, sheets, chests, compasses, and animals — especially horses and livestock.

In the eighth part, Leitsch deals with the King's jewellery and his art collections. The author devotes his attention to the royal collection of paintings, dividing them according to different categories such as portraits or religious paintings, while elsewhere he comments on sculptures such as figures of the Virgin Mary, the apostles, and other saints (Stanislaus, Casimir, Sigismund). Among the royal tapestries, he singles out the series showing the 'Story of Scipio'. Reliquaries are treated separately.

The penultimate part considers the life of the court while travelling around the Commonwealth. The author's focus here is on the King's journeys from Kraków to Warsaw, for parliamentary sessions, the ruler's departure from Warsaw to Danzig in 1593, and his return to Kraków from Danzig the following year. Sigismund's journey to Wielkopolska (Great Poland) and Royal Prussia in 1623 is

dealt with here. In highlighting these issues, the author pays special attention to the condition of roads and lodgings and is particularly drawn to the problem of the itinerant court's supply system.

In the last part of the book Leitsch addresses the problem of court life during incidences of the plague. Niepołomice, Osieck, Ujazdów and Tykocin were among the Sigismund's favourite places of refuge.

The work contains several interesting annexes. They include, among other things, the composition of the court personnel and the salaries of Sigismund's courtiers from 1589, the list of those who remained in the service of Queen Anna and their salaries from 1595, the inventory of the Queen's garments from 1592, a comparison of the royal kitchen's expenditure in the two weeks before the King's marriage to Archduchess Anna in 1592 and one week after the wedding, and the inventory of Sigismund's garments from 1595. Also included is a list of abbreviations, an extensive bibliography, which unfortunately does not separate primary sources from secondary literature, and indexes of names, bodily parts, animals and plants, places, countries, functions, titles, groups and phenomena.

It would be impossible to offer a comprehensive review of such a large work. A choice has to be made concerning the problems to be addressed more closely. The most interesting aspect for a historian of political culture is the analysis in the fifth part, entitled 'Die Vertrauten'. This section runs to almost 300 pages and in itself could constitute a full-length monograph. It is characteristic, that by consistently using the term 'confidant', Leitsch creates a social category which is much wider than just Sigismund's favourites. It involves — in addition to the most powerful men of the realm — those who, in enjoying the ruler's confidence, were only used as instruments to facilitate the carrying out of confidential missions. The group is, therefore, made up of both high ranking dignitaries as well as men of more humble origin — representatives of the petty nobility or even plebeians.

The author is fully aware of the existence of different degrees of royal trust. Hence, he specifies those who were on such close to the ruler that they were admitted into the domestic life of the royal family and were on almost friendly terms with monarch. This group is referred to as the inner circle. At first, it included the King's sister Anna, then Sigismund's first wife, and, temporarily, the Jesuit Sigismund Ernhofer. It was also at this time that Georg Schiechel became one of his most trusted men. Later, the inner circle was expanded to include Ursula Meyerin and Casper Denhoff. The author's attention is concentrated especially on the last three of these people.

Georg Schiechel, a plebeian from Bavaria, arrived at the royal court in 1592 as a chamberlain of Anna of Austria. Undoubtedly, he was dependent on Archduchess Maria, the King's mother-in-law. The analysis of a great number of letters sent by Schiechel to the Archduchess, in which he talked about the position to which he had risen, convinced Leitsch that Schiechel had an exceptional role at court and was extremely close to the ruler. To this the author adds other argu-

ments. He indicates that Schiechel was paid more than the two other chamberlains, was entrusted with the task of encrypting the Queen's letters to her mother, and was responsible for checking the inventory of the royal jewellery. On several occasions Sigismund dispatched Schiechel to Graz to inform the Archduchess Mary of events in Poland. It seems, therefore, that he enjoyed the confidence of both Sigismund and his first wife, but the author exaggerates in placing him in the circle of the King's most trusted advisors. Indeed, Leitsch himself raises doubts. He asks how someone who, for all his intelligence and loyalty, could become the King's advisor, since he had displayed no deeper intellectual qualities. Despite these doubts, Leitsch argues that Schiechel advised Sigismund in matters concerning Danzig and Brandenburg. This opinion is based on an account by the city's envoy, Keckerbart, who on 8 June 1598 supposedly informed the Danzig authorities that the king had conversed for half an hour with Schiechel concerning their city (p. 1846). It was probably not Sigismund himself but Schiechel who told Keckerbart about the conversation. Moreover, it is highly likely that Schiechel — who acted as an intermediary in order to secure Keckerbart his audience with the King — exaggerated his own role in order to obtain payment for his services. It seems likely that the envoy of the largest city of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth would have been received by the King without such mediation. A similar situation took place three years later when the Brandenburg envoys sought an audience with the King. Should one really assume that they would not have been granted the audience without Schiechel's help? In my opinion there is insufficient evidence to suggest that Schiechel was one of the King's confidants. In March 1595 Sigismund ennobled him. This was a great reward for his service, but is this really proof for his special relations with the monarch? At the beginning of 1601, when the King was having a meal with his sister Anna, Schiechel served at the table. This is equally weak evidence for placing him within the king's inner circle.

A substantial study of seventy-four pages is devoted to Ursula Meyerin. There is no doubt that she merits our attention. The author convincingly explains that her real name was Meyerin and that she should not be confused with another Ursula who bore the name Gienger (Gengerin) and who also served at Queen Anna's court (pp. 1849–51). Leitsch rejects the opinion that it was Ursula who sexually initiated the young Prince Władysław. Leitsch is just as trenchant and convincing when discarding the view that she was a spy whom the Habsburgs had managed to plant in Sigismund's court. Certainly, she served as a good intermediary between the Polish king and the Habsburgs. However, whenever there was a conflict of interests she remained loyal to the Polish ruler. She acquired considerable influence over the upbringing of the royal children, and under Queen Constance she became the most influential among the queen's ladies-in-waiting. She was also loyal and faithful to Prince Władysław, whom she had raised. She never wavered in her loyalty to him even when he was in conflict with his father. It is also worth noting that she had a good command of Polish and was also able to read Latin texts, although we know nothing of her education. Ursula was born in Munich,

probably in 1572, where her mother, Anna Meyerin, was employed at the court. The author mentions various theories about Ursula's descent. He takes a closer look at the suggestion that Prince William of Bavaria, known for having four illegitimate daughters, might have been her father. The line of argument concerning Ursula's ducal father presented by the author appears to be quite convincing. Credence is lent to this theory by the fact that young Meyerin appeared at Court in Graz as a foster child of Archduchess Mary, that is, William's sister. Meyerin owed the launch of her career at court to Queen Anna. However, it was not long before she became the Queen's trusted 'second hand'. Testimony to her genuine closeness to the Queen is the fact that the women sometimes took meals together. Meyerin also managed to develop a similar relationship with Queen Constance. The author provides some interesting information about the role which this relationship between Ursula, the King and the Queen played in foreign policy. According to Count Adam Schwarzenberg, who in 1620 served as the Brandenburg envoy, during his audience with the Queen, Ursula was standing next to her, but a little way behind her. Schwarzenberg complained that although the Queen was extremely gracious towards him, it was of no use in the face of Ursula's opposition to any concession in the Elector's favour (p. 1898). Leitsch has provided us with a striking interpretation of this scene. He judges that it was the King who ordered Ursula to prevent the queen from making any commitment which might prove harmful. The author engages in a polemic with Wanda Dobrowolska, rejecting the view that Ursula also participated in the audiences held by the King.

Sigismund's second wife, unlike his first, could not play a role in advising the King, for she was uninterested in politics and apparently was not as bright as her older sister. This would explain why it was Ursula who began to perform that role. Leitsch wonders why it took so long for Sigismund to avail himself of her counsel. He thinks that it may have had something to do with the problems caused by the King's twenty-year old son, Władysław. As the young prince was formally put in her care, she and the king had much to discuss. It was only then, Leitsch believes, that the King discovered her talents. However, this explanation is not fully satisfactory. In dealing with the issue, one needs to take into consideration the changes that took place in the royal court at this time. In July 1615 the Grand Marshal of the Crown, Zygmunt Myszkowski, died, to be followed to the grave in August by the Marshal of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Krzysztof Monwid Dorohostajski. Andrzej Bobola, Chamberlain of the Crown, passed away on 16 November 1616, and at the beginning of 1617 the Chancellor of the Crown, Szczyński Kryski, also died. This succession of deaths left a void in the circle of the king's advisors, which the trusted and talented Hofmistress was perfectly suited to fill. The author is aware of the fact that it was as early as 1606 that Meyerin was attacked for meddling in politics, but he attaches little importance to it. However, one might wonder whether those nobles who supported the rebellion which Mikołaj Zebrzydowski, the Palatine of Kraków, led against the King were not wholly mistaken. If this was the case, then Ursula's

political significance evolved over time, and around 1615–16 she acquired permanent status as an important, albeit informal advisor to the king.

The author also raises the question of Ursula's influence on internal affairs. He says that she was asked for help on various occasions. There is much evidence to support this view. Leitsch agrees with Krzysztof Chłapowski and the author of this review that she was able to influence the ruler's decisions concerning distribution of royal land and of less significant offices, but that she was not able to play as essential a role in the appointments of leading dignitaries of the Kingdom (p. 1921).

The last person from the King's inner circle whose role is discussed in the book is Casper Denhoff. The author rejects the view held by Władysław Czapliński that Denhoff made his way into the court as early as 1600. The evidence confirms his presence at court seven years later (p. 1923). Denhoff was quick to win the King's confidence and was relied upon by the ruler as an intermediary who helped him to deal with matters relating to Prussia and Brandenburg. Leitsch stresses the fact that it was in 1616 that Jerzy Ossoliński referred to Denhoff as the monarch's favourite 'valet'. The author asks whether the King's confidant was also in the pay of the Brandenburg Elector. Denhoff's name is absent from the list of those who received financial remuneration from the Elector in 1614. However, he is known to have received 380 florins from the ruler of Brandenburg Prussia in 1618. Hence, it cannot be ruled out, says the author, that he derived some financial profit for his service. Nevertheless, according to Leitsch there is evidence to advocate the view that Sigismund remained closely associated with his favourite: 1) they used to sing Calvinist psalms together, 2) it was Denhoff who carried the enfeebled monarch over to his throne (from 1631), and 3) Denhoff was endowed with such a charming personality that he easily attracted others. The author also tries to answer the question of when the King's counsellor converted to Catholicism. He thinks that it must have taken place between 1618 and 1628 (pp. 1931–32). This, however, can be determined with more accuracy. There survives a letter from Rafał Leszczyński to Denhoff dated 10 January 1625 which clearly indicates that the conversion took place at the turn of 1624/25.¹ To conclude the remarks on the group of Sigismund's most trusted men, it is worth emphasising a point which seems to have escaped the author's attention. Both Denhoff and Meyerin's gradual rise to political eminence was parallel. They both began to build their position in 1616 and their ascendancy, once achieved, continued until the end of Sigismund's reign.

¹ This is how Denhoff's friend viewed his conversion to Catholicism: 'Beforehand, if somebody deigned to say something of this sort about me, it could be supposed that it resulted from Lutheran connections. Now, as a Catholic, say what you know of this, and it will mean more than it did previously, and I shall benefit from this thing, which I do not altogether praise', Rafał Leszczyński to Casper Denhoff, 10 January 1625, quoted after Edward Opaliński, *Elita władzy w województwach poznańskim i kaliskim za Zygmunta III*, Poznań, 1981, p. 64.

Among the other high ranking officials who surrounded the King the author mentions are: Marcin Leśniowolski, Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł, Stanisław and Marcin Krasicki, Mikołaj Wolski, Andrzej Bobola, Krzysztof Monwid Dorohostajski, Zygmunt Myszkowski, Łukasz Opaliński and Maksymilian Przerębski. The first of them, Marcin Leśniowolski, the Castellan of the Podlasie region could not, contrary to the view held by the author, come from a middling noble family as his father served as the Castellan of Warsaw and his uncle was the Castellan of Czersk. According to Leitsch, it was as early as 1590 that he lost Sigismund's confidence. This view is based upon the belief that the monarch refused to inform Leśniowolski of his plan to abdicate (p. 1939).² In trying to prove the King's unwillingness to reveal his plans to the Castellan, the author relies on the account by the papal nuncio, Annibale di Capua, of 30 October 1590. The nuncio reports that Leśniowolski informed him of the King's secret negotiations with Archdukes Ernst and Maximilian. But at that time, as the author rightly points out, Sigismund conducted no negotiations with Maximilian, from which it follows that Leśniowolski was no longer familiar with the details of Sigismund's policy (p. 1940). However, this all lends itself to a different interpretation. Leśniowolski, realizing how unpopular Maximilian was, and knowing that the nuncio was his adherent, deliberately attempted to misinform the latter. He must have expected di Capua to divulge this information to Maximilian's Polish followers. Public knowledge of Sigismund's negotiations with Maximilian would have been more damaging to the ruler's reputation than if only his talks with Ernst had been leaked. Leśniowolski, as the papal nuncio reported, left the court in disgrace on 1 January 1591.

Albrycht Radziwiłł, Grand Marshal of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, also enjoyed Sigismund's favour for a brief period of time. Following his disappointment with Leśniowolski, states Leitsch, Sigismund looked for an advisor in whom he could place his trust and who was not hostile towards the Habsburgs. The Grand Marshal seemed to be particularly well-suited to perform the role. Like all members of the Radziwiłł family, he was well-disposed to the House of Habsburg. He was included in the King's matrimonial and abdication plans and endorsed them greatly, but he died soon after the King's wedding (13 July 1592).

Stanisław Krasicki and his son Marcin served as the Queen's chief stewards. Stanisław was a courtier already during the reign of Sigismund Augustus, holding the post of the King's secretary. In 1592 he was appointed to the position of Queen Anna's Chief Steward. However, it is difficult to agree with Leitsch's opinion that he had no time to exercise this function as he actually served as the Crown Field Quartermaster. Stanisław Krasicki quit his military position in 1593 to become Castellan of Przemyśl (p. 1945). It is only his appointment to the post of the Queen's Chief Steward that allows one to regard him as enjoying the King's confidence. His son, Marcin, had been a royal courtier from at least 1592. He participated in Queen Constance's wedding in 1605, and it was in the same year that he became her car-

² In the years 1589–90 Sigismund considered abdicating the Polish throne in order to consolidate his power in Sweden after the expected death of his father, John III Vasa.

ver. He accompanied the queen on her trip to Wilno (Vilnius) in 1609. In practice, he exercised the function of the Queen's Chief Steward, since Lew Sapieha, who formally held this office, actually stayed with the king at Smolensk. From 1616 when he took up the post of the starosta of Przemyśl and Castellan of Lwów (L'viv), he rarely appeared at court. Nevertheless he remained on good terms with the Queen and in 1630 he was promoted to Palatine of Podlasie. He must have rendered outstanding services to Ferdinand II, since the latter conferred on him the title of Count (on 5 July 1631), but there is no evidence to suggest that he won Sigismund's special confidence. Nevertheless, the King could rely on the Krasickis at least for his contacts with the Habsburgs.

Mikołaj Wolski, the Grand Marshal of the Crown, certainly ranked among the king's most trusted men. His long stay at the Imperial Court and the support he gave Ernst, but not Maximilian, during the third royal election in 1587 predisposed him to become the King's trusted advisor. According to the account of the Brandenburg envoy Michael Gise, Wolski was influential as early as 1595. Despite this, his was a slow progression. Twice, in 1593 and 1596, he unsuccessfully sought the position of the Court Marshal of the Crown. It is thought that the Queen was unconvinced of his ability to successfully fill this position (p. 1951). It was not until 1600 that Wolski was promoted to a public office. Three years later, and again seeking the Grand Marshalty of the Crown, he was obstructed in his efforts by Zygmunt Myszkowski. Leitsch argues that Jan Zamoyski's attempts³ to persuade the King to approve Wolski's nomination proved counterproductive and actually frustrated Wolski's efforts. This, however, throws into doubt the opinion that Wolski genuinely enjoyed Sigismund's confidence. The Queen's dislike of Wolski may have been crucial here. However, it is noteworthy that at elsewhere Leitsch suggests that the Archduchess supported him. These contradictory opinions are never resolved in the book.

Leitsch writes that Wolski's relations with both Grand Marshals Zygmunt Myszkowski and Krzysztof Monwid Dorohostajski were far from cordial. This, states the author, was probably the result of disputes over authority. In my opinion, this needs to be interpreted as reflecting the rivalry within the group of regalists who surrounded Sigismund. When Wolski took up the office of Grand Marshal in 1615, he was already sixty-five years old and could no longer spend much time at court. Sigismund III had previously dispatched him on a variety of secret diplomatic missions. For example, in 1613 Wolski was involved in negotiating the so-called family pact with Emperor Maciej. During his pilgrimages to Częstochowa, the King often visited him in Krzepice. Such a conduct indicates that the ruler placed a great deal of trust in Wolski.

³ Jan Zamoyski (1542–1605) the Chancellor and Grand Hetman of the Crown. Although during the election he supported Sigismund III's candidacy for the Polish throne, later he usually remained in opposition to the King.

The Crown Chamberlain, Andrzej Bobola, was among Sigismund III's few confidants who did not speak German. Leitsch is wrong to assert that Bobola was appointed to his office in 1606 (p. 1962). The mistake is all the more surprising because in dating Bobola's appointment, the author relied on *Spis Urzędników Centralnych* (the List of Central Officials) which clearly indicates that the nomination must have taken place between 14 February and 22 March 1607.⁴ Relying on the testimony given by Claudio Rangoni, the papal nuncio, one may argue that Bobola managed to secure a position of great influence as early as 1599. He was well-liked and remained on friendly terms with a great many individuals (Dorohostajski, Krzysztof Piorun Radziwiłł, Bernard Maciejowski, Piotr Skarga). Leitsch is, therefore, justified in ascribing him a pivotal role in shaping the king's policy on the distribution of land and offices.

Krzysztof Monwid Dorohostajski, the Grand Marshal of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, was one of the ruler's few Protestant favourites. The author maintains that Sigismund must have tested his loyalty, which in his opinion is illustrated by the fact that he kept him in the position of the Court Marshal for two years while that of the Grand Marshal remained vacant. Dorohostajski was favourably inclined towards the Habsburgs. He tried to inform the Protestant branch of the Radziwiłł family of everything that went on at court.

Zygmunt Myszkowski, the Grand Marshal of the Crown, came from a family with a tradition of court service dating back to the reign of Sigismund I the Old (1506–48). Leitsch finds it surprising that Myszkowski, although not yet influential, was invited to take part in Sigismund's wedding in 1592. However, what the author does not take into account is the fact that Myszkowski already held the office of starosta of Piotrków, participated as an envoy at the Coronation Sejm (Diet) (1587/88) and the Inquisition Sejm (1592), and served as deputy (judge) to the Crown Tribunal, all of which suggests that his position among the Polish nobility was already significant. Leitsch rightly remarks that the acceptance by Myszkowski of the name Gonzaga was met with disapproval by his fellow Polish nobles, while he was also attacked for using the title Margrave of Mirów (p. 1972).⁵ The author also engages in a polemic with Urszula Augustyniak who claimed that Myszkowski's stay abroad in the years 1607–09 was connected with the task of neutralizing the anti-royal agitation carried out by Janusz Radziwiłł. However, Radziwiłł was actually abroad from September 1609 to November 1610 and they only met once, at the royal court in France. Myszkowski was actively involved in the conduct of foreign policy. Sigismund valued his connections and often used him for secret missions. With dignitaries from the Duchy of Mantua and Brandenburg-Prussia, he managed to establish especially influential relationships. The Electors thought highly of him, paying for his service as much as 25,000 florins. Only the chancellor, Jan Zamoyski, received more money from the rulers of Brandenburg

⁴ *Urzędnicy*, vol. 10, Kórnik, 1992, no. 704.

⁵ Zygmunt Myszkowski was in 1597 accepted as a member of Gonzaga family of Mantua and in 1596 Pope Clement VIII conferred on him the title of Margrave.

than Myszkowski. In Zamoyski's case, he was paid some 40,000 Polish zlotys. The fact that Myszkowski failed to establish good relations with Rome or that he was on poor terms with papal nuncios did not hinder his relationship with Sigismund. He avoided displeasing the King even when he advised against Sigismund's marriage to Constance, as he was convinced that it was likely to cause domestic political problems. Besides, he disliked Archduchess Mary. As Leitsch stresses, in spite of being on very good terms with the monarch, Myszkowski never succeeded in becoming a second Zamoyski, although that was the position to which he undoubtedly aspired. His premature death is explained by his frequent poor health.

Leitsch doubts whether the Grand Marshal of the Crown, Łukasz Opaliński, was able to influence Sigismund's decisions to the same extent as those mentioned above (p. 1983). He is justified in arguing that not all royal marshals were able to win Sigismund's confidence. The fact that the ruler, while seeking refuge from the plague, took Opaliński with him to Tykocin in 1630 might be seen as evidence that the Crown Marshal was in fact close to Sigismund. A letter dating from June 1628 from Krzysztof Radziwiłł to Stanisław Kurosz seems to confirm Opaliński's ability to influence the monarch's decisions concerning the distribution of land and offices. In the letter Radziwiłł reveals that Opaliński was connected with the group which was being formed around Stanisław Łubieński, Maksymilian Przerębski, and Wolski. Writing in 1620 to the Elector that Opaliński will secure him better access to the King, Schwarzenberg provided evidence that Sigismund's favour could often be gained through the agency of Opaliński. However, as Leitsch emphasizes, the Marshal was not in the pay of the Elector, which in the author's opinion proves that he was not able to influence Sigismund (p. 1986). However, it may be argued that Opaliński simply did not promote Brandenburg interests. Surprisingly, in presenting the figure of Opaliński, the author fails to mention his good command of German or the service he rendered to Sigismund as the royal representative to the *sejmik* (dietine) of the palatinates of Great Poland at Środa.

The Crown Referendary and Castellan of Sieradz, Maksymilian Przerębski, is dealt with by Leitsch in a half-hearted manner. The author notes that Przerębski's relatives, namely Hieronim Rozdrażewski, the bishop of Cujavia, and Zygmunt Myszkowski helped his career. It is surprising that Leitsch makes no mention of Przerębski's part in the legation dispatched to Austria with a view to bringing Queen Constance to Poland. The omission is noteworthy because the author generally pays close attention to such details. However, Leitsch has stressed Przerębski's role in Polish diplomacy, especially with regard to the relations with the Habsburgs. That the King had a high opinion of him is testified not only by his part in diplomatic legations and the functions he exercised at the Queen's court, but also by the great number of crown lands he received from the King, of which only the *starostwo* of Piotrków is mentioned by Leitsch.

The King's confidants included several ecclesiastical chancellors and vice-chancellors of the Crown. It is hard to agree with Leitsch's assertion that

Sigismund kept Bishop Wawrzyniec Gembicki at a distance. Their correspondence clearly shows that the ruler had a liking for him. Sigismund's relationship with Piotr Tylicki, the Vice-Chancellor of the Crown and later bishop of Kraków, certainly passed through different phases, and one may accept the view that the King never ceased to resent Tylicki's dealings with Zamoyski (p. 1992).

According to Leitsch, among Sigismund's confidants one needs to count Jan Tarnowski, Maciej Pstrokoński, Henryk Firlej, Andrzej Lipski, Stanisław Łubieński and Jakub Zadzik. The first of them, Jan Tarnowski, had served as Crown Referendary since the reign of Stephen Báthory (1576–86), to whom he owed his post. Displaying unswerving loyalty to Sigismund from the very outset of his reign, in 1592 Tarnowski was elevated to the vice-chancellorship of the Crown. In spite of the fact that he did not want to commit himself to advancing Habsburg interests, in 1598 he became the bishop of Poznań and in 1603 Primate of Poland. This rapid advancement is evidence that Sigismund placed a great deal of trust in him.

In Leitsch's opinion, Maciej Pstrokoński, the Chancellor of the Crown, was not so much the King's confidant as his loyal aide. He began his career as Sigismund's secretary in 1588. Although he could rely on the support of Stanisław Karnkowski, Hieronim Rozdrażewski and Jan Tarnowski, it took him eleven years to come into the office of the Crown Referendary. Not long after, he was consecrated bishop of Przemyśl. A turning point in his career came in 1605 when he showed an unswerving loyalty to the King.⁶ In the same year he was appointed as Crown Vice-Chancellor while it was obvious that he remained an opponent of the old Chancellor. In 1606 he succeeded Zamoyski. During the anti-royal rebellion (*rokosz*) he defended the King, but, unlike Myszkowski, advocated accommodation with the rebels.

Henryk Firlej, the Crown Vice-Chancellor and Primate, descended from a magnate family, which Leitsch suggests may have facilitated his career, although in comparison with others, Firlej did not progress quickly. In articulating this view, the author fails to see that this was the case only until 1613. From that year onwards, his career proceeded rapidly. In 1613, while holding the office of the Crown Referendary, he was appointed to the position of Grand Secretary, and rose in the same year to the Vice-Chancellorship of the Crown. In 1616 he received the bishopric of Łuck which was not as impoverished as the author suggests. A year later Firlej became the bishop of Płock and in the years 1624–26 he occupied the post of the Primate of Poland. The author argues that there is no evidence to suggest that he was one of Sigismund's confidants. However, and as Leitsch writes, Firlej was close to Queen Constance, especially during her stay in Wilno in the years 1611–12 (p. 2002). It is this relationship with the Queen which may explain why his career suddenly gained momentum and made such rapid progress. It is also worth noting that Firlej was on very good terms with

⁶ In 1605, the opposition embarked on virulent attacks against Sigismund in connection with his plans to marry Archduchess Constance.

Bobola, which is attested to by the fact that Bobola's last will was validated in his presence (26 April 1612).⁷

Andrzej Lipski, the Crown Chancellor and the bishop of Kraków, was also the Queen's protégé. He began his career as a royal notary in 1598 and in 1617 he became the bishop of Łuck. It is interesting to note that his succession to the see took place while he served as Sigismund's secretary and not, as was common practice, as the holder of a dignitary office. He earned much dislike because of his haughtiness, but he had a good rapport with the royal family, even though he did not always approve of Sigismund's policies. In 1630, for example, he favoured offering the Grand Hetmanship of Lithuania to Krzysztof Radziwiłł (p. 2007). That he was deeply attached to the royal family is clearly seen in his decision to bequeath to the family all his savings. From 1605 onwards he was entrusted with increasingly important tasks. The king valued him as an advisor and he was active in supporting royal diplomatic efforts, especially when it came to the relations with the Habsburgs, even earning the Emperor's gratitude.

Just like Firlej and Lipski, Stanisław Łubieński, the Vice-Chancellor of the Crown and bishop of Płock, was also the Queen's protégé (p. 2008). Supported by Pstrokoński and Gembicki, he made his way into the royal chancellery in 1593 and gradually managed to win the king's confidence. However, he had to wait thirty years before he was nominated to his first bishopric in Łuck. One may suppose that Sigismund tested his loyalty and usefulness. The author believes that Łubieński had a very good relationship with Sigismund. This point of view is apparently confirmed by the fact that the King, while fleeing from the plague in 1625, took Łubieński with him. However, one may counter this line of argument by saying that in 1625 the bishop of Łuck already served as the Vice-Chancellor of the Crown and the king simply needed him to be in his presence. To be sure, Leitsch does not neglect to mention Łubieński's address to the Polish Sejm that met in Thorn (Toruń) in 1626, in which the Chancellor recommended John Casimir, Sigismund's younger son, as the successor to the throne, but he fails to explain the background details of the address. Leitsch also chose to ignore the fact that Łubieński failed to climb into the position of Chancellor and had to satisfy himself with one more bishopric, that of Płock, which he received in 1627 and in which he remained until the end of his life. In my opinion, this is evidence that he fell out of Sigismund's favour. Also worthy of note in this context is the fact that Stanisław Łubieński's brother, Maciej, who was definitely less intelligent and qualified, managed to rise to the rank of primate.

Jakub Zadzik, the Chancellor of the Crown and the bishop of Kraków, owed the launch of his career to Bobola. It was in his capacity as royal secretary that

⁷ 'Oblata testamentu przez Andrzeja Bobołę, podkomorzego koronnego', 26 April 1612, AGAD, MK 153, fol. 433.

he stayed with the king for more than a year at Smolensk.⁸ Leitsch does not omit this element from his biography but he attached no weight to it. Zadzik's correspondence illustrates that he undertook a huge amount of work as royal secretary and brought himself to Sigismund's attention as an able organizer. As a result, it was as early as 1613 that he became Grand Secretary of the Crown. As such, he was put in charge of the royal chancellery. However, it was not until twelve years later that he rose to the rank of Vice-Chancellor of the Crown. Not long after, he was appointed Crown Chancellor. As Leitsch emphasizes, on several occasions Zadzik accompanied as he escaped from the plague (p. 2013). Moreover, he is known to have had good relationships with Anna Vasa and Prince Władysław.

Leitsch hesitates to include Stanisław Żółkiewski and Stanisław Miński among Sigismund's confidants. The first, the Field Hetman of the Crown, was until 1605 an ardent adherent of Zamoyski. However, during the rebellion he decided to take the side of the King and from then on was regarded as the monarch's loyal servant. For a long time Sigismund refrained from offering him the post of Grand Hetman of the Crown, which could be viewed as an indication of Żółkiewski's failure to win Sigismund's favour. The problem with such an argument is that in 1615 the papal nuncio, Francesco Diotallevi, wrote that no one had such a hold over the ruler as Żółkiewski. His elevation to the ranks of Chancellor and Grand Hetman in 1618 was intended as a political demonstration. Leitsch believes that the hetman was looked upon by the king as a reliable servant who advocated a pro-Habsburg policy, and also suggests that his appointment to the office of chancellor was supported by Ursula and by the queen (p. 2017). The author admits that Miński, the Vice-Chancellor of the Crown, although he, too, enjoyed the monarch's trust and adhered to his pro-Habsburg policy, was not entrusted with significant tasks. Thus, according to Leitsch, Miński was not a man of great political influence. If this was the case then one must ask why Miński was given the position at all. A potential answer is that Sigismund simply had no better candidates at that time.

In the end, Leitsch decided to leave Żółkiewski and Miński out of the group of Sigismund's confidants, but he added to it Hieronim Gostomski, Lew Sapieha, Sebastian Lubomirski, Hieronim Wołłowicz, Szczęsny Kryski, Stanisław Radziejowski and Albrycht Stanisław Radziwiłł. The Austrian scholar fails to devote much attention to the first of this group. Nothing is mentioned about the court experience gained by Gostomski's as Sigismund August's courtier. The author also fails to address his family's attitude towards the Habsburgs. Nevertheless, it is noted that he supported Sigismund during parliamentary debates. Surprisingly, the author also fails to tackle the issue of Gostomski's legation to Emperor Rudolph II in 1601, but he does mention his involvement in court festivities. Moreover, Leitsch does not see that Gostomski provided his brothers with openings for great careers, which suggests that he wielded some influence.

⁸ In the years 1609–11 Sigismund undertook the siege of Smolensk which was in the hands of Muscovy.

The Vice-Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lew Sapieha, was quick to gain Sigismund's favour. As early as June 1588 di Capua, the papal nuncio, remarked in his letter to Rome that Sapieha enjoyed the King's great confidence. In April 1589 he was promoted to the Lithuanian chancellorship. The chancellor knew how to remain on good terms with the monarch. On his visits to Warsaw, he would bring with him a small orchestra which he shared with the King. Moreover, Sapieha always stayed in the Royal Castle. The author stresses the fact that his loyalty cost Sigismund dearly, as from 1589 to 1633 Sapieha leased the Lithuanian customs. Sapieha was initially unsupportive of the monarch's marriage to Archduchess Anna (p. 2023), but later he became her chamberlain. He also occupied this post at the court of Queen Constance, but in neither case did he actually perform his duties. He remained in good relationships with Ursula and Sigismund's second wife.

Sebastian Lubomirski, Castellan of Wojnicz, was first of all involved in economic affairs. He accumulated great wealth and managed to win Sigismund's trust by lending him considerable sums. In the years 1589–92 he leased salt mines. His role consisted mainly of handling the ruler's financial matters. He must have been close to the court, since he accompanied the Queen on her trip to Kraków in 1592 and in 1595 he was dispatched as an envoy to Archduchess Mary. He was at first sceptical about Sigismund's marriage to Constance, but he soon accepted the ruler's choice and managed to develop a good relationship with the new Queen.

Hieronim Wołłowicz, the Vice-Chancellor of Lithuania and starosta of Samogitia (Żmudź, Žemaitija), stayed at court for many years. Between 1600 and 1618 he served as the Court Treasurer and then the Treasurer of Lithuania. The author emphasizes the fact that he was adept at handling royal couple's financial affairs.

The author is mistaken in following Szymon Starowolski, by stating that the Chancellor of the Crown, Szczęsny Kryski, died on 10 February 1618. In reality, Kryski had died by 22 February 1617.⁹ The mistake found in Starowolski is probably a typographical error and the Chancellor may have died exactly one year earlier. One also cannot agree with the opinion that Kryski came from an ordinary, moderately wealthy noble family, since he was the son of the Palatine of Mazovia and the great-grandson of the Palatine of Płock. Leitsch also thinks that the future chancellor's acquaintance with Myszkowski helped his career. Nevertheless, he doubts whether — as is believed by Czesław Lechicki — he was, along with Bobola, among Sigismund's confidants.

The author has failed to offer sufficient evidence to support the argument that Stanisław Radziejowski, the Palatine of Łęczyca, enjoyed Sigismund's great

⁹ As Andrzej Szoldrski informed Wawrzyniec Gembicki in a letter sent from Warsaw on 22 February 1617: 'Pogrzeb nieboszczyka pana Canclerza 16 martii odprawować się bendzie' (the Chancellor's funeral ceremony will be celebrated on 16 March) Stockholm Riksarkivet, Extranea IX Polen, vol. 100.

confidence. His long service at the King's court and at that of Anna Jagiellon can hardly be regarded as settling the question definitely. He was actively involved in diplomatic activity, and he is known to have often hosted the royal family in his estate at Radziejowice, which supports the view that he had a good relationship with the King. The acceptance of this view is further encouraged by the fact that when he was about to leave for Italy in 1615, the Queen equipped him with a letter of recommendation to her sister, the Duchess of Tuscany.

Undoubtedly, as Leitsch stresses, it was Albrycht Radziwiłł's birth and position as a magnate that allowed him to make such swift progress during his career. He became Vice-Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania at the age of 26, and was then promoted only four years later to the rank of Chancellor. Radziwiłł was Sigismund's faithful aide. In 1619 he accompanied Prince Władysław during his campaign in Silesia and five years later on his trip abroad. This certainly attests to the great trust which Sigismund was prepared to put in him.

Leitsch encountered great difficulties in trying to single out a group of spiritual lords among Sigismund's confidants. The most serious problems are caused by five clergymen whom one cannot, in the face of insufficient evidence, regard as the King's closest aides. The first of them is Paweł Wołucki, the bishop of Cujavia. He had a good relationship with the King, but Sigismund did not value him as much as he did Gembicki or Marcin Szyszkowski. Without trying to resolve the issue definitively, it is worth mentioning that he did manage to secure seats in the Senate for his brothers. This is an indication of political influence. The other clergyman is the bishop of Chełmno, Jan Kuczborski. Leitsch is justified in expressing some doubts about the role this bishop may have played. In dealing with the figure of Kuczborski, it is worth rectifying several inaccuracies that crept into the author's account. According to Leitsch it was only from 1613 that Kuczborski was Regent (a high official in the greater and lesser chancellery of the Crown, responsible for the drafting and checking of documents) of the Crown Chancellery. He was in fact then a Regent in the greater chancellery. However he served as Regent in the Minor Chancellery earlier, from no later than 1610.¹⁰ It is easy to see that he occupied both these posts when the Great Seal remained in the hands of Kryski who must have trusted him enough to employ him in one or other part of the Chancellery. The date of his elevation to the see of Chełmno is also inaccurate. This did not take place on 28 April 1614 (p. 2040) but on 26 March 1614.¹¹

The group of spiritual lords whose role in the reign of Sigismund III, according to Leitsch, remains obscure, also comprises the bishop of Płock, Hieronim Cielecki. Enumerating the offices held by Cielecki, the author omits the

¹⁰ He is mentioned as occupying the post on 17 August 1610. Thus, he served as regent three years earlier than is suggested by Leitsch. He then accompanied the king at Smolensk. MK 153, fol. 201v.

¹¹ We know about this from the letter Tylicki sent to W. Gembicki from Krakow on 22 March 1614: Stockholm Riksarkivet, Extranea IX Polen, vol. 103.

post of the Regent of the Minor Chancellery. Cielecki exercised this function as early as 1611.¹² He was not appointed to the position of Referendary on 22 April 1615 as he already held this post on 26 March 1614.¹³ He is likely to have received the office in 1613 which is when Firlej advanced to the rank of chancellor. The author writes that he handled the Queen's financial affairs and served as chamberlain for all of her children. It is difficult to find an example of a greater level of trust being placed in an official. However, Leitsch argues that there is no evidence of Cielecki's political significance (p. 2041). The problem is that this evidence does exist. In 1622, contrary to the wishes of the Vice-Chancellor, Waclaw Leszczyński, he arranged for the office of the starosta of Koło to be assumed by Łukasz Opaliński junior. As he wrote to the Court Marshal: 'Often, when I recalled Your Lordship when talking to Her Majesty the Queen and Mistress Urszula, I was always put off with the response: Fear not for the Lord Marshal, Sir' (Z królową JejMcią i Panną Urszulą częstokroć przypominając WMci mówiłem, zawsze w tym byłem potkany i odprawiony: O Pana Marszałka nie frasuj się WM).¹⁴ In 1618, he seemed certain to become Vice-Chancellor of the Crown. If Radziwiłł's testimony is to be relied on, the King wanted to promote him to this position. Unfortunately, Cielecki fell victim to an intrigue at court and the vice-chancellorship was given to Andrzej Lipski instead.¹⁵

It is surprising that the author counts Tobiasz Małachowski, the Royal Secretary and the abbot of Paradyż, among the group under discussion. Paweł Piasecki, the bishop of Kamieniec and later of Przemyśl, is also mentioned as belonging to the group in question.

In the end, the author decided to qualify the following people as the King's confidants: Hieronim Rozdrażewski, Jerzy Radziwiłł, Szymon Rudnicki, Andrzej Opaliński, Marcin Szyszkowski, Jan Wężyk and Jan Lipski. The first of them served as the bishop of Cujavia for as long as nineteen years (1581–1600). As is stressed by the author, he was the mainstay of the Habsburg party. Nevertheless, in relations with the Emperor he represented Polish interests and the King plainly trusted him, as he did not hesitate to inform him of his abdication plans.

During the election of 1587 Cardinal Jerzy Radziwiłł supported Archduke Maximilian, but by 1589 he was a supporter of Sigismund. Leitsch argues that in the face of the Emperor's ill-feeling towards Sigismund, the latter was eager to take advantage of Radziwiłł's good relations with the Habsburgs (p. 2046). The Cardinal participated in the negotiations with Archduke Ernst and was in-

¹² He is mentioned to have occupied the post on 28 October 1611. He also attended the sessions of the diet in 1611, MK 156, fol. 135.

¹³ Piotr Tylicki to Wawrzyniec Gembicki, Kraków, 26 March 1614, Stockholm Riksarkivet, Extranea IX Polen, vol. 103; in *Spis Urzędników*, vol. 10, no. 863, the date of 22 April 1615 is given as the earliest date of occupying the office.

¹⁴ Hieronim Cielecki to Łukasz Opaliński, February 1612, BR, MS 2, p. 1130.

¹⁵ Opaliński, *Elita władzy*, p. 81.

volved in the talks concerning Sigismund's matrimonial plans.¹⁶ His close relations with the king are also illustrated by the fact that he baptized Prince Władysław and his sister and, after Wawel Castle was destroyed by fire, he lent the ruler his residence.

The prince-bishop of Warmia, Szymon Rudnicki, had a career typical of a clergyman, holding successively the offices of Royal Secretary, Regent of the Chancellery and Grand Secretary of the Crown before finally securing his important and lucrative prince-bishopric. He took up the position in Warmia in 1605 and remained there until his death in 1621. His close relations with Sigismund can be seen in his consent to grant the coadjutorship of the bishopric to three-year-old Prince Jan Olbracht (p. 2050). One might also add that in 1615 his brother Jan became Castellan of Sieradz.

The author stresses that the career of the bishop of Poznań, Andrzej Opałiński, was facilitated by his descent from a magnate family. However, after his father's death, the Grand Marshal of the Crown, in 1593, Andrzej Opałiński's relatives were either men of little significance or were too young to support his career. The author enumerates a great number of diplomatic missions on which the bishop was sent, regarding it as proof that he enjoyed Sigismund's confidence. However, there is no mention that he served twice as Sigismund's representative to the sejmik of Great Poland at Środa and strongly supported the King during the rebellion. His career after 1607, that is, after he became bishop of Poznań, did not attract Leitsch's interest. Instead, the author merely states that that Opałiński baptized Prince Charles Ferdinand. Does this mean that Andrzej Opałiński fell out of favour with Sigismund? The thing is, however, that, along with Primate Gembicki, Andrzej Opałiński was the mainstay of the royalist party in Great Poland and a brother of the King's other confidant, Łukasz. There is also evidence to suggest that he promoted the careers of others.

The bishop of Kraków, Marcin Szyszkowski, owed his career advancement to Myszkowski, and after the latter's death it was his pro-Austrian attitude and good relations with the Court in Graz that fuelled his career. The ruler showed that he cherished warm feelings for Szyszkowski by allowing him to baptize his children, Alexander and Anna Constance.

According to Franciszek Siarczyński and Jan Korytkowski, Primate Jan Wężyk owed his elevation to the sees of Przemyśl and Poznań, as well as his position as Primate of Poland, to the Queen's support. The author found no evidence that Wężyk was connected with the Queen. Thus, Leitsch maintains that it was by handling Sigismund's correspondence and supervising the preparation of the documents involved in attempts to obtain a cardinalate for Claudio Rangoni, the

¹⁶ In planning his abdication, Sigismund III thought of supporting the Archduke's efforts to obtain the Polish throne. At the same time, the Polish monarch was going to marry Archduchess Anna. It was only the King's most trusted men who were involved in the secret negotiations concerning these plans.

former papal nuncio in Poland, that he managed to win the monarch's favour. The development of his career then needs to be treated as a reward from Sigismund for Wężyk's service.

Jan Lipski served only as the Regent of the Crown Chancellery. Leitsch believes that it was Kryski who in 1617 helped him into the Royal Chancellery. This view is unsustainable, for in 1617 the chancellor was no longer alive. However, it has been rightly noted that Lipski had the backing of Zadzik (p. 2057). That he enjoyed Sigismund's confidence is supported by Lipski's role in securing a cardinal's hat for the papal nuncio, Giovanni Battista Lancellotti. Given the fact that he became the bishop of Chełmno as late as 1635, one may find it surprising that the author decided to deal with him in this chapter.

It is among the secretaries and courtiers that the author managed to find another group of Sigismund's confidants. Undoubtedly, by being in constant touch with Sigismund, one was able to ingratiate oneself in his favour and exert some influence over him (pp. 2060–61). Leitsch is unclear as how to treat Krzysztof Koryciński, the King's long-term secretary and courtier. He is able to discern some signs of the ruler's confidence in Koryciński life and career, for example, his participation in the legation to Spain in 1605. This, however, in Leitsch's opinion is not enough to regard Koryciński as the ruler's confidant.

Leitsch concludes that the group of the King's confidants recruited from among his secretaries and courtiers comprised the following: Franciszek Rylski, Stanisław Fogelweder, Jan Bojanowski, Andrzej Bolko, Mikołaj and Zygmunt Opacki. Franciszek Rylski was only the King's bedchamber servant. However, he was one of the pages whom Catherine Jagiellon, Sigismund's mother, took with her to Finland. It is hardly surprising, then, that he initially attended the most secret meetings held by the monarch. Leitsch is of the opinion that his role did not go beyond offering the ruler advice on financial matters. He was made responsible for the royal land holdings in Little Poland (Małopolska) in 1592, and from that moment on he became involved in the administration of the royal household. It is suggested that he became starosta of Hrubieszów in 1588, but he was actually given that office in Kamionek.¹⁷ Leitsch also fails to note that Rylski served as the Royal Secretary.¹⁸

Stanisław Fogelweder, the abbot of Miechów, was appointed in 1567 to the position of Royal Secretary. He is notable as he was the only burgher in this group of Sigismund's confidants. During the first two elections held 1572–75, Fogelweder supported the Habsburg candidates. However, in relations with the Habsburgs, he nevertheless represented Polish interests. Both Anna Jagiellon and Sigismund often dispatched him on secret diplomatic missions, while the King's great confidence in him is also clearly seen in Sigismund's decision to entrust him with the education of his children.

¹⁷ Nomination, 2 November 1588, MK 135, fol. 326.

¹⁸ Recorded as such on 30 April 1589, *ibid.*, fol. 571.

Jan Bojanowski, secretary and bedchamber servant, was a Protestant, and this important detail is absent from Leitsch's account.¹⁹ The argument that Sigismund gave him only a few villages, and that this explains the large amount of time he spent at court serving as Radziwiłł's agent, is not quite correct (p. 2073). On 15 February 1588 he was granted a huge annual salary of 1,000 florins from Riga²⁰ and in 1595 became the starosta of Bobrujsk, which suggests that Sigismund appreciated his service.

Andrzej Bolko served as *starszy nad srebrem* (senior silverware officer). He was often entrusted with huge sums of money, which leaves one convinced of the trust the ruler placed in him. Leitsch believes that after 1606 Bolko left for Bohemia, but in fact it was as late as 17 July 1609 that he received a mill at Ruda in the district of Warsaw.²¹

The Chamberlain of Warsaw, Mikołaj Opacki, was Catherine Jagiellon's page, so the monarch knew him well and trusted him. He was responsible for the King's jewellery and in 1603 he was appointed as governor of the royal lands in Małopolska. This office yielded a considerable income for Opacki. Worthy of mention are other examples of royal favour. The most important of them was the title of the starosta of Piaseczno.²² In 1598 he became Chamberlain of Warsaw,²³ an office reserved for the sons of great lords, or for those who enjoyed the ruler's confidence. It was usually the first rung in their career. From 1619 Zygmunt Opacki served as Queen Constance's valet. Sigismund relied on him for maintaining diplomatic contacts with the Habsburgs and in 1622 the queen leased out to him the *starostwo* of Latowice with a rent of 4,000 florins, which the author rightly interprets as evidence for Opacki's good relationship with the royal couple. This is also suggested by the fact that he was still a young man when he was given the post of Chamberlain of Warsaw.²⁴

Leitsch also tries to identify Sigismund's confidants among those who were connected with the court of both Queens. Among them was Ruggiero Salomon. He arrived in Poland along with Queen Anna and after her death he became the king's chaplain. This circle also includes Hans Lobmair, who in 1596 became the queen's gatekeeper and was later given the task of administering the property the queen would inherit should her husband die, and Jan Piotrowski who was responsible for silver jewellery.

¹⁹ In 1575 he probably established the Protestant church in Bojanów, see Krystyna Opalińska, 'Szlachta różnowiercza i pozostałości po jej księgozbiorach w zbiorach BUW (XVI w.)', in *Księgozbiory szlacheckie XVI-XVII wieku. Kolekcje historyczne*, 2 vols, Warsaw, 2004–2009, vol. 2, p. 201.

²⁰ For the granting of an annual salary of 1,000 florins from Riga see under 17 February 1558: MK 134, fol. 167.

²¹ For the granting of the mill to Andrzej Bolko see, 17 July 1609, MK 153, fol. 114.

²² Nomination, 22 July 1604, MK 148, fol. 383; he ceded the *starostwo* of Piaseczno to his son Sigismund, 8 January 1619, MK 163, fol. 135.

²³ The earliest appearance comes from 28 June 1598: MK 142, fol. 170.

²⁴ Nomination: 17 September 1623, MK 169, fol. 270.

Mikołaj Kołaczkowski deserves closer attention. At first, he was involved in supplying the court with food and in 1592 he entered the service of Queen Anna. In 1610, in his capacity as the Queen's Equerry and Master of the Kitchen, he was granted tenancy of the *starostwo* of Ujście and Piła, and this was the land that Anna would inherit if Sigismund died. Hence, Kołaczkowski may be assumed to have enjoyed the queen's great confidence. Leitsch presumes that Kołaczkowski may have died in 1635, and he is known to have died between 3 February and 8 June 1635.²⁵

The last group dealt with here also includes foreigners who were not in Polish service. In this context Leitsch mentions Pierre de Lecolle. He arrived in Poland from Sweden, along with Sigismund. Sigismund relied on him for dispatching his correspondence. Lindorm Nilsson Bonde, was the King's Swedish secretary and was active in secret diplomatic efforts.

The King's cousin, Count Gustav Brahe, grew up with Sigismund. In the years 1587–92 he was among Sigismund's closest advisors, but later he lost the King's confidence. Claudio Rangoni was also one of the foreigners whom Leitsch decided to count among Sigismund's confidants. He was the only papal nuncio whom the ruler treated almost like a member of his family.

Andrzej Köne, a citizen of Danzig (Gdańsk) who was known by the name of Jaski, managed to win the king's trust in spite of the fact that he was also the Elector's agent. Sigismund even embarked on some religious disputations with him. In 1604 Köne entered Polish service, thus serving two masters, but Leitsch leaves unresolved the issue of to which one he was most loyal.

In conclusion, it is worth stressing that Leitsch considers the list of those in receipt of payment from the Elector as the most important criterion by which to judge whether someone was close to Sigismund or not. The author believes that the Elector was willing to pay money only to those who wielded significant influence over the king. One might see merit in such an argument, but such a list does not include all those whom the King was prepared to trust. Leitsch himself admits that some of the ruler's confidants took no money from the Hohenzollerns. Opałiński and Bobola are good examples of those close to Sigismund who received no imperial payments. Another way of identifying Sigismund's confidants is by tracing those who maintained correspondence with the Habsburgs or were involved in secret diplomatic missions. One might gain the King's favour in such a context by having a good command of German. Similarly, proving one's knowledge of, and one's good taste in, art and music, or even being a good dancer, would all be advantageous for an ambitious candidate. Of course, one's unswerving loyalty to Sigismund was of crucial importance. Leitsch gives examples of the persons with whom the king was disappointed and who lost his confidence. One can mention here Marcin Leśniowski or Paweł Piasecki.

²⁵ He was still alive on 3 February 1635 and must have died by 8 June 1635. *Urząd-nicy*, vol. 1, part 2, Wrocław, 1987, no. 556; Krzysztof Chłapowski, *Starostowie w Wielko-polsce, na Kujawach i Mazowszu 1565–1696 (materiały źródłowe)*, Warsaw, 2007, p. 45.

The public activity of the ruler's confidants is not discussed at all in this work. Moreover people like Szcześny Kryski, Stanisław Miński, Łukasz Opaliński, or Stanisław Radziejowski were deeply engaged in parliamentary activity, thus making themselves even more useful to the monarch. It was in parliament – to a greater degree than in secret diplomatic activity – that one had a chance to prove one's loyalty to the king. Leitsch notices the significance of the work by those in the royal chancellery connected with diplomatic efforts, but neglects activity connected with the preparation for sessions of the sejm, or with the participation of royal secretaries in parliamentary sessions.

Two questions arise here: whether Leitsch omitted any protagonists from his account of Sigismund's confidants, and whether Leitsch has added to the group anyone who should remain absent. In a few cases Leitsch does seem to have been mistaken as he has included in the group figures who were not the ruler's confidants. This can be said above all of Georg Schiechel who was certainly not among the King's most trusted advisors. We can also raise doubts about the inclusion of Stanisław Radziejowski and Jan Lipski. In contrast, one should add to the group the Jesuit, Piotr Skarga, and Wacław Kiełczewski. The latter spent many years at the king's court, was Castellan of Łęczycza, and served as the Chamberlain of the Crown. Polish historians are inclined to rank the Jesuit, Bernard Gołyński among the ruler's confidants, but Leitsch holds a different view. He may be right, considering the fact that Gołyński reproached the King's sister for her Lutheran denomination.

It is worth stressing that Leitsch's study provides the reader with an almost complete portrait of Sigismund's confidants. Moreover, Leitsch's archival research has resulted in a great number of interesting details that shed much light on how Sigismund's court functioned.

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Lidiia Lazurko, *Chasopys 'Kwartalnik Historyczny' i rozvytok pol'skoi istoriohrafii ostann'oi chverti XIX — pershoi polovyny XX stolittia*, Drohobych, 2010, Redaktsiino-vydavnychi viddil Drohobyts' koho derzhavnoho pedahohichnoho universytetu imeni Ivana Franka, pp. 282

In 2010 the Ukrainian book market saw the publication of a monograph that may be particularly interesting to Polish readers. The work by Lidiia Lazurko attempts to highlight the general tendencies that shaped historical debates carried out in the pages of the *Kwartalnik Historyczny* in its Lwów (L'viv, Lemberg) period, that is, in the years 1887–1939. Although it is not without defects, this monograph offers a comprehensive account of an important period in the history of Polish (and not only Polish) historiography and of its achievements.

The book is divided into four chapters. The first, entitled 'Istoriografia ta dzherela' (Historiography and primary sources), contains a systematic overview of a rich collection of primary sources and secondary literature on which Lazurko drew in writing her book. Noteworthy are works by both Polish and Ukrainian historians involved in the realization of the research project 'Multicultural historiographical milieu of Lwów in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries'. It is worth stressing that Lazurko was an active participant in this project, which was initiated in 2002 by Jerzy Maternicki and Leonid Zashkil'niak.

The second chapter, entitled 'Stanovlennia, orhanyzatsiini zasady ta osnovni napriamy diial'nosti "Kwartalnika Historycznego" (1887–1939)' (The Formation, Organizational Principles and the Main Directions of the *Kwartalnik Historyczny*) consists of two subchapters covering 1887–1917 and 1917–39 respectively. The most illuminating chapter in the whole volume, it discusses the institutional and personal dimensions of the history of the *Kwartalnik Historyczny*. The line of argument is developed here with great clarity. Lazurko moves smoothly across different layers of complex narrative and displays much skill in placing its various strands — for example, Ksawery Liske's organizational efforts undertaken in the initial phase of the *Kwartalnik*'s publication, or the analysis of various economic data and the journal's statute — into a broader perspective of the development of Polish historiography.

The next two chapters aim to present the scholarly achievements of the historians who contributed to the journal. They are organized according to specific topics. In the third part, 'Vnesok "Kwartalnika Historycznego" v doslidzhennia istorii Pol'shi' (The *Kwartalnik Historyczny*'s contribution to the study of the Polish history), Lazurko, in offering a systematic analysis of the journal's content, isolates three areas of research and devotes a separate subchapter to each example. They concern respectively: the history of Poland in the Middle Ages, the history of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries and the national history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. She offers a thorough discussion of the general trends and topics that drew the interest of historians working closely with the *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, stressing their efforts to make the journal meet high scholarly standards. This chapter, too, distinguishes itself through a coherent structure, this coherence being disturbed only by the paragraphs dealing with international affairs (pp. 97–100). These sections would be better placed in the following chapter which is specifically devoted to the discussion of international issues. Although it is a matter of individual preference, the narrative is at certain points too schematic. For instance, there is the specification of subthemes of historical studies, the enumeration of scholars along with their particular scholarly interests and examples of their publications. A better impression is certainly made by those parts of the chapter that give an account of the fierce historiographical controversies surrounding such topics as the origin of the Polish state, the periodization of Polish history or the causes of the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

It is with regard to the fourth chapter that one may have some serious reservations about the volume. These, however, pertain not so much to the chapter's detailed findings as to its general construction. It is entitled 'Nacional'na problematyka na storinkah "Kwartalnika Historycznego"' (National issues in the pages of the *Kwartalnik Historyczny*). Here, Lazurko specifies three thematic blocks, devoted respectively to Polish-Ukrainian, Polish-Lithuanian and Polish-German relations. The very specification of these three groups raises questions to which the chapter gives no satisfactory answers. One wants to ask, for example, where successive historical incarnations of Russia stand relative to the thematic division introduced by the author? Does Lazurko, in leaving Polish-Russian relations out of her account, want to suggest that this problem was only rarely discussed in the pages of the journal? This, however, is clearly inconsistent with the emphasis she places on the importance of the journal's polemics with Russian historiography (pp. 45–46 and 129–30). This is not the only problem one might see here. It is also worthwhile raising the problem of how Lazurko isolates the specific problems she intends to confront. Thus, in trying to identify the principles underlying the way in which she organizes her narrative, one arrives at the conclusion that they are heterogeneous. For example, Polish-Lithuanian relations are discussed in politico-historical terms (the relations with the Great Duchy of Lithuania), while ethnic and geographical criteria are used in the discussion of Polish-Ukrainian relations. The author's discussion of the journal's papers concerning the Middle Ages clearly shows that such an approach is anachronistic. Moreover, it is worth noting here that Lazurko herself stresses the fact that contributions on the Middle Ages rank highly in the scholarly accomplishments of the historians contributing to the *Kwartalnik Historyczny* (p. 123). Only indirectly does Lazurko touch upon the problem of choosing specific topics when carrying out a thematic analysis of primary sources, and she does this while giving an account of a controversy over the validity of the term Ukraine/Ukrainian (p. 169). In terms of factual information Lazurko, while discussing these three different areas of research, succeeds in fulfilling the task she set herself. However, one must conclude that the construction of the fourth chapter is less clear than the structure of each of the three other chapters, and of crucial importance in this context is the absence of the 'Russian problem' mentioned above. Nonetheless, this shortcoming does not detract from the value of the detailed findings presented in the chapter.

The work is enhanced considerably by tables providing statistical data concerning the content of the subsequent issues of the *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, as well as the role of particular scholars representing different centres of Polish historical thought in giving the journal its professional form. Short biographical notes on all of the journal's editors-in-chief in the years 1887–1939 are an important addition, especially for Ukrainian readers. The author offers valuable information on Ksawery Liske, Oswald Balzer, Aleksander Semkowicz, Fryderyk Papée and other distinguished representatives of 'Polish Clio' in the period under discussion.

The book is impeccably edited. Only rarely do we find inconsistencies, in the spelling of particular terms — *vide*, for example, the term ‘idea jagiellońska’ (pp. 189–91). This is, however, the only such case in the whole book.

Lazurko’s analytical effort has resulted in a monograph that deserves credit for systematizing and augmenting our knowledge of Polish historiography at so significant a point in its development. It is also interesting in that it offers the perspective of an outsider, who has highlighted questions underexplored by Polish scholars. This work by Lidia Lazurko certainly deserves recommendation.

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