




Rafał Zarębski (Łódź)

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1918-2169>

## THE LINGUISTIC CREATION OF A CITY IN THE 16<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY POLISH ACCOUNTS FROM TRAVELS TO THE HOLY LAND

It is commonly known that the 16<sup>th</sup> century was a time of intense geographical discoveries, which allowed people then to see the world from a perspective other than that rooted in the Middle Ages. The mobility of the Polish gentry, primarily connected to studies abroad, and a hunger to learn about previously unknown cultures, societies, parts of the world as well as fauna and flora, spurred new explorations. Geographical discoveries made such a strong impression on people's consciousness that they wanted to confront these stories with their own experiences, which was accompanied by curiosity, suspicion, uncertainty, and, undoubtedly, fear<sup>1</sup>. However, foreign travels had a practical dimension, which included political, scientific, commercial and religious goals<sup>2</sup>. In terms of literary genres, it was diaries and journals that best narrated a story about unknown regions of the world. Peregrination as a description of travels abroad is closely connected to various pilgrimages, studies abroad, diplomatic missions as well as touristic excursions<sup>3</sup>.

The first travels of Polish pilgrims to the Holy Land started in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century while the first description by Anzelm Polak entitled *Terrae sanctae et urbis Hierusalem descriptio* was printed in 1512. Anzelm Polak was a Bernadine and a confessor at the Holy Grave while he stayed in the Holy Land between 1507–1508. Having returned to the country, he described Jerusalem, its environs and the places of worship. His account is comprised of guide notes arranged according to the parts of the world. He starts his from the south (Bethlehem and Hebron), through the west (Emmaus, Jaffa) and north (Nazareth, Samaria) and finishes with a description of the eastern part (Jericho and the Dead Sea). Anzelm Polak made Jerusalem the central point of his account. The author uses the geographical and historical information as a background to the illustration of Christ's life, the

<sup>1</sup> C. HERNAS, *Barok*, Warszawa 1998, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> *Antologia pamiątek polskich XVI wieku*, ed. R. POLLAK, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1966, p. XXVII.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XXVII.

Biblical events and numerous legends and tales circulating at the time. The text includes specific locations of the described towns, which gives it a practical dimension and allows it to work almost as a guide. Naturally, the author was not able to reach all the places he noted in his story. In reference to the areas less accessible and farther from Jerusalem, he used external accounts, at times uncritically taking advantage of incredible information<sup>4</sup>.

Nevertheless, the first travel diary written in Polish from a trip to the Holy Land which took place before 1570 is the text by Jan Goryński. This diary is noteworthy because, despite a certain schematism and clumsiness of the descriptive technique, it departs from the formula of a guide's peregrination. The informative layer, which includes a description of the countries, cities and places of worship, was enriched with interesting attempts at relaying the events in which he participated. Goryński's travel route was determined by a typical 16<sup>th</sup>-century itinerary to holy lands. His diary starts with recounting the dangers of sea travel, through descriptions of Jaffa, Rama, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and ends with a report from the travel home (Rama, Jaffa, Cyprus)<sup>5</sup>.

Another account from travels to the Holy Land that is superior to the aforementioned work, both in terms of the descriptive technique and literary flair, is M.K. Radziwiłł's<sup>6</sup> diary *Peregrynacja do Ziemi Świętej, Syrii i Egiptu*, which is the main subject of this article. It was not the thrill of adventure that spurred the author to travel east but penance: having converted from Calvinism to Catholicism during his illness, he had sworn to take this expiatory journey to the Holy Land<sup>7</sup>. As a 'svelte' man, Radziwiłł had spent a significant part of his life traveling abroad. It took him four years to prepare for this exotic journey. In September 1582, having written down his testament, he embarked (along with his companions and servants) on this long, exhausting, but most of all, fascinating, journey. The route led through Venice, Crete, Cyprus, Jaffa, Tripoli, Syria, Damascus, Samaria, Galilea, to Jerusalem. Once there, the author participated in excursions to Bethlehem, the Jordan River, the Dead Sea and Jericho. From Jerusalem, Radziwiłł went to Jaffa, Tripoli and Egypt (which the diary describes extensively), Damietta, Cairo, Alexandria, Italy and Venice, after which, in 1584, he returned to his hometown, Nieśwież. The phenomenon of Radziwiłł's text stems from the fact that while most

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XXVIII–XXIX.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XXXV.

<sup>6</sup> The author took this journey between 1582–1584. Upon his return to the country, he entrusted his notes to Tomasz Treter, who having edited the text into four letters written from travels, translated the diary to Latin. The Latin version was published in Braniewo in 1601, and was later translated to German and Polish. The Polish translation by Andrzej Wargocki has had eight editions. The original manuscript was published in 1925 by Jan Czubek. H. Dziechcińska writes about the complicated history of Radziwiłł's diary. Cf. H. DZIEHCINIŃSKA, *O staropolskich dziennikach podróży*, Warszawa 1991, p. 79.

<sup>7</sup> C. HERNAS, *Barok...*, p. 159.

Old-Polish memoirs from long journeys are limited to discussing the itinerary, noting what a given author saw or was told by the guides, Radziwiłł does not stop at his own observations and information from others. His comments, interpretations of visited places, encountered people and foreign nature have a storytelling quality. Furthermore, he can often juxtapose that world with his native, Polish-gentry reality<sup>8</sup>. Radziwiłł not only describes the social circles and their organization, the foreignness of nature and the grandeur of architecture, but he also confronts these with earlier travelers' accounts and historians' works. He tries to arrive at the truth in order to relay it faithfully<sup>9</sup>.

The 16<sup>th</sup>-century diaries are an abundant source for research in the area of anthropologic linguistics<sup>10</sup>. Aside from nature and people, it is the urban organism that is the key protagonist of the diaries at the time. These authors stopped at numerous towns and cities along their way and later discussed them extensively in their works<sup>11</sup>. The Polish writers were not alone in their approach to this product of culture. As H. Dziechcińska points out, in many a European diary at the time, the descriptions of agglomerations provide a certain construction axis to a work's composition<sup>12</sup>. In the Renaissance, an interest in this civilizational product – the city – developed for several reasons. Firstly, it was connected with the worldview

<sup>8</sup> *Antologia pamiętników polskich...*, p. XXXVI.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. C. HERNAS, *Barok...*, p. 159; H. KACZMAREK, *Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki” podróż po starożytnym świecie (I. Balkany i wyspy)*, BP 4, 1989, p. 343–351; D. ROTT, *Staropolskie chorografie. Początki – rozwój – przemiany gatunku*, Katowice 1995; A. REJTER, *Kształtowanie się gatunku reportażu podróżniczego w perspektywie stylistycznej i pragmatycznej*, Katowice 2000; D. CHEMPEREK, *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej, Syrii i Egiptu Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki” – relacje konwertyty*, [in:] *Radziwiłłowie. Obrazy literackie. Biografie. Świadectwa historyczne*, ed. K. STĘPNIK, Lublin 2003, p. 39–48; M. KACZMAREK, *Peregrynacje do Jerozolimy i Betlejem w XVI wieku w świetle dziuryszy Anzelm Polaka, Jana Goryńskiego i Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki”*, [in:] *Ecclesia et homines. Instytucje i ludzie Kościoła w czasach Jagiellonów (XIV–XVI w.)*, ed. A. JANUSZEK-SIERADZKA, Sandomierz 2014; L. ZINKOW, *Wenecja na trasie peregrynacji Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki” do Egiptu i Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Terra Culturae. Obszary, transfery i recepcje kultury. Studia oraz szkice o kulturze i historii*, ed. Ł. BURKIEWICZ, Kraków 2018, p. 143–156.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. R. ZARĘBSKI, *Językowe sposoby osvajania egzotycznej rzeczywistości w „Podróży do Ziemi Świętej, Syrii i Egiptu” Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki”*, [in:] *Pogranicza*, ed. D. KOWALSKA, Łódź 2007, p. 753–766.

<sup>11</sup> There is an abundance of literature on the history of the idea of the city, see e.g. H. PIRENNE, *Les villes du Moyen Âge*, Paris 2017 (Bruxelles 1927); L. MUMFORD, *The City in the History*, New York 1961; C. DELFANTE, *Grande histoire de la ville. De la Mésopotamie aux États-Unis*, Paris 1999; L. BENEVOLO, *The History of the City*, London 1980; A. MAŁCZAK, *Życie codzienne w podróżach po Europie w XVI i XVII wieku*, Warszawa 1980; Z. PASZKOWSKI, *Historia idei miasta. Od antyku do renesansu*, Szczecin 2015; Z. HOJKA, *Diariusz Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła Sierotki – pierwszy polski przewodnik po Ziemi Świętej i krajach Lewantu*, [in:] *Miasto jako przedmiot refleksji i fascynacji. Rozważania socjologiczne i historyczne*, ed. IDEM, K. WOJTYŚIAK, D. DOMŻAŁSKI, Katowice 2015; M. KURAN, *Obraz ulic w miastach imperium osmańskiego w wybranych relacjach polskich podróżników z drugiej połowy XVI i pierwszej połowy XVII wieku*, LC 1, 2019, p. 19–40.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. H. DZIECHCIŃSKA, *O staropolskich dziennikach...*, p. 42.

of the epoch, which was marked by the anthropocentrism; the city appeared as a perfect invention specially suited to human needs. Secondly, it was a result of a shift in how the city was perceived and the way it operated. While *in the Middle Ages, it was primarily a center of administrative and legal activities, over time, it gradually gained a residential meaning*. Consequently, the Renaissance highlighted the relationships between individual urban elements, which contributed to the more distinct homogeneity of the urban creation<sup>13</sup>. Finally, the urban awareness of the people at the time grew significantly. Although their daily lives were still strongly tied to nature, which in reference to the culture of that time, especially the Polish one, was particularly illustrated by following the role model of a land-owning noble, they were increasingly more dependent on what was happening in the city.

The urban awareness of the Renaissance was shaped by a variety of factors that influenced one another. Certain criteria determined whether a given building complex could be categorized as a city, which decided how it was viewed. An examination of the semantics of the lexeme *miasto* in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Polish language, contrasted with the Old-Polish period<sup>14</sup>, proves that on the one hand, its meaning underwent clarification; on the other, the scope of its polysemy expanded (concrete meanings, e.g. a city in the modern understanding, an administrative unit or district as well as metaphorical ones, e.g. a community of the living and the dead, the heavenly kingdom, etc.). The definitional prototypical features of a city already included such semes as: an area surrounded with a wall, a planned building arrangement, and squares and streets forming a road network. The walls and fortifications comprised the most visible outline of the city. The 16<sup>th</sup>-century urban awareness was also informed by means of other elements, such as certain structures (particularly of public utility) and their construction rules. The tenets of architectural art were closely linked to an interest in the system of weights and measures, which was undergoing gradual standardization. Such aspects as defense, fortifications, the presence of secular and religious buildings or the road network connected to the life of an agglomeration formed a certain stereotype of presenting a city in travel texts. This stereotype corresponded with the rules for description found in rhetoric textbooks that made references to Antiquity and determined

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 54.

<sup>14</sup> *Miasto* 1. 'a place, locus', 2. 'a city, its residents', 3. 'a basis, foundation' (Sstp); 1. 'a place', 2. 'an enclosed and typically walled-in area with high-density planned housing comprising squares and streets, forming a more or less independent administrative, self-governing and sometimes political unit; the city's residents; city authorities' (metaphorical meanings: 'on the religious community of the living and the dead; also on the Church', 'on the heavenly kingdom', 'on the world; on life and earthly possessions', a) 'a district, a part of the city', b) 'in Old Testament, a military garrison with an arms warehouse, etc.', c) 'a citizenship', d) 'a city's image'. Cf. *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku*, vol. I–XXXIV, ed. M.R. MAYENOWA, F. PEPEŁOWSKI, Wrocław 1966–1994; vol. XXXV to the entry ROWNY, ed. K. MROWCEWICZ, P. POTONIEC, Warszawa 1995–.

how one should find appropriate and subject-suitable means of verbalizing one's visual experiences when praising or admiring a city<sup>15</sup>.

In the old diary literature, it is worth considering the city in the context of the aforementioned notion of linguistic creation. Presumably, when describing different cities in the past, the authors remained in constant tension between what their school knowledge dictated about the manners of praising and describing the urban topos, and their firsthand experiences visiting a city. It is noteworthy that a nobleman who embarked on a journey at the time received a set of instructions from his parents or protector, not only regarding the itinerary, sightseeing the foreign lands and noting down the pilgrimage, but also pointers on how to observe and describe an agglomeration. It is illustrated by Jakub Sobieski's advice for his sons, Jan and Marek, who were setting on their journey in 1646: *When you are traveling through a great city, ask around whose city this is, sub cuius regimine, who its praesidia are, what its situs is. Note all this down in that book of yours throughout your pilgrimage*<sup>16</sup>.

The goal of this outline is to reveal the linguistic means used by the 16<sup>th</sup>-century authors<sup>17</sup> when constructing an image of foreign cities, which were often exotic, especially for the Renaissance reader. A methodological pillar for these reflections will be the notion of the *linguistic creation*, which I understand similarly to T. Skubalanka as an *entirety of linguistic processes created by a text's author for a given purpose; a particular fictional being which is an element of an artist's 'vision of the world'*<sup>18</sup>. Therefore, I will be interested in the vocabulary and conventional means of style (such as epithets, comparisons, evaluative lexicon), which an author used to refer to or depict an encountered city and to characterize its exterior look and various ways of functioning. The notion of the linguistic creation is connected to the *semiotic role*. This term, also applied by the aforementioned researcher, is key in the context of evoking the object of the description. As a certain conceptual framework, the aspects (roles and profiles) of a city produced by different linguistic means are a consequence of the issues that are key to the idea of a linguistic vision of the world; a vision understood as a subjective vantage point of an author and the perspective from which he or she interpreted reality<sup>19</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. H. DZIECHCIŃSKA, *O staropolskich dziennikach...*, p. 53, 44–63.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, p. 41.

<sup>17</sup> The analyzed material comes from the following texts: ANZELM POŁAK, *Opisanie Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Antologia pamiętników polskich...* (cetera: AP), p. 3–12; JAN GORYŃSKI, *Peregrynacja do Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Antologia pamiętników polskich...* (cetera: JG), p. 13–29; MIKOŁAJ KRZYSZTOF RADZIWIŁŁ SIEROTKA, *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej, Syrii i Egiptu 1582–1584*, ed. L. KUKULSKI, Warszawa 1962 (cetera: MR). The parenthesis contains an abbreviation of the diary's title and the page number.

<sup>18</sup> T. SKUBALANKA, *Językowa kreacja Jacka Soplicy (Księdza Robaka)*, [in:] EADEM, *Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Norwid. Studia nad językiem i stylem*, Lublin 1997, p. 20.

<sup>19</sup> J. BARTMIŃSKI, *Punkt widzenia, perspektywa, językowy obraz świata*, [in:] *Językowy obraz świata*, ed. IDEM, Lublin 1999, p. 103–120.

Regarding the description of the cities, the 16<sup>th</sup>-century authors employed a certain technique (especially, Radziwiłł) of making references to the characteristics featured in historiographic sources, e.g. *Że o tym mieście* [Tripoli – RZ] *wiele ich pisze, ja odpuszczam* (MR 27). [Since so many have written about this city [of Tripoli – RZ], I shan't].

The diarists, who observed the described reality from the viewpoint of a proprietor, which was a dominant perspective in the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>20</sup>, were interested in any mechanisms connected to how the urban organism worked. On the other hand, it is difficult to unambiguously state how much of this interest was dictated by a purely human response of curiosity about the new and the foreign, and to what extent it was a product of a certain rhetorical convention that dated back to Antiquity. It is also not without significance that in order to make the exotic realities more graspable, the travelers attempted to relate the foreign elements to the known reality, e.g. via similes, which pointed to closer, more familiar objects (at least, to educated readers)<sup>21</sup>. For example:

Które miasto ani małością jest zaciśnione, ani się komu wielkością nie uprzykrzy [...]. Wszakż zda mi się, iż na dłużej i na szerzą jest na kształt Krakowa (AP 10), mym zdaniem, jako oni piszą, [miasto Kair – RZ] większe jest, niż pięćkroć miasto Paryż we Francji (MR 142).

The city neither suffocates with smallness nor is it too large to be a nuisance [...]. Methinks, in terms of length and width, its shape resembles Cracow, I believe, as they write, [the city of Cairo – RZ] is five times bigger than the city of Paris in France.

The diarists typically introduced the agglomerations that were less known to the readers at the time by means of synonymic doubles, whose task was to clarify and disambiguate which place specifically on the 16<sup>th</sup>-century world map was being discussed<sup>22</sup>, e.g. *przyjechałem do Kanei, olim Cydonia* (MR 215) [I had arrived at Kanea, formerly Cydonia]. More recognizable cities were indicated via their commonly used names, e.g. *miasto Betlejem* (AP 4) [the city of Bethlehem], *o dwudziestej zoczyliśmy pyramides, które blisko Kairo* (MR 140) [around eight in the evening, we spotted the pyramids nearby Cairo]. In the case of smaller urban centers, the authors sporadically used the diminutive “town”, e.g. *Miasteczko błahe w tej insule w bok było widzieć, ale tam nawy nie przystępują, a też portu nie masz* (MR 201) [The town, tiny on this island, was seen from the side, but no vessels accede there nor does it have a port]. At times, the first presentation of a place, aside from its proper name, was expanded by comments of a historical or mythological nature

<sup>20</sup> A. NIEWIARA, *Wyobrażenia o narodach w pamiętnikach i dziennikach z XVI–XIX wieku*, Katowice 2000, p. 25–26.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. R. ZARĘBSKI, *Językowe sposoby osvajania...*

<sup>22</sup> Cf. IDEM, *Onomastykon szesnastowiecznych relacji z podróży do Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Nazwy własne a społeczeństwo*, vol. II, ed. R. ŁOBODZIŃSKA, Łask 2010, p. 497–510.

or various anecdotes related to the town, e.g. *Sachar miasto przedniejsze w Samarii (o którym Ioann. 4) między dwiema górami Garizim i Hebal. Dzisiaj zową Turcy to miasto Neapolim* (MR 45) [*Sychar, one of Samaria's finest cities (cf. Ioann. 4), is located between Mounts Gerizim and Ebal. Today, the Turks call this city Neapolis*].

Based on definitional characteristics, a place that fulfilled the requirements of being a city, remained in clear opposition to nature, which stemmed from ancient rhetoric<sup>23</sup>. Travelers, charmed by the achievements and panache of exotic urban architecture were perfectly aware of that, however, the contexts in which a city appears in the background or next to nature point to a rather strong codependence between this civilizational product and nature, e.g. *Z tej góry Damaszek widzieć dobrze, bo pod nią leży miasto, bardzo długie, w cudnej i żyznej wszelakimi owocami równinie* (MR 34) [*This mount offers a good view of Damascus because there is a city underneath it, very long and nestled in a marvelous plain fertile with all types of fruits*]. Interestingly, the way of presenting the natural beauty of the described cities is strongly marked by the viewpoint of a proprietor, dominant in the nobility's mentality of the 16<sup>th</sup> century<sup>24</sup>, e.g.

O żyzności pól damasceńskich i różności fruktów byłoby co pisać, ale już to drudzy uczynili [...]. Jest w Syrii, w Tripoli i w Balbech, i tu zwłaszcza w Damaszku frukt jeden, zalecający się szczególnie dobrym smakiem, zową go w wielu językach mauza (MR 38).

A lot could be written about the fertility of the damascene fields and the diversity of its crops, but others have already done that [...]. In Syria, Tripoli and Balbec, and especially here, in Damascus, there is one particularly tasty crop, which they call mauza in many languages.

In Radziwiłł's diary, the city is typically depicted as a walled-in area, separated from the wasteland, farmlands, woods and territory not owned by anybody and often dangerous, e.g. *same tylko miasto nowe Kairo murem jest opasane, a stare miasto i Bulach nie mają wkoło muru* (MR 142) [*only New Cairo is walled-in, Old Cairo and Bulac have no walls around them*]. In the perception of large agglomerations, the author notices the difference between the center – the city, and its peripheries – the suburbs, e.g.

Z tej góry prawie dobrze widzieć większą część miasta [Kairu – RZ] i ty przedmieścia, w których (jako się wspomniało) jest tak wiele moschei; jest rzecz pozorna patrzeć, zwłaszcza że oprócz nowego miasta, w którym nie tak wiele, ale wszędzie indziej po mieście i po przedmieściach, i wkoło na każdą stronę, jako okiem przejrzy (MR 161).

From this mount, you get a rather good view of most of the city [of Cairo – RZ] and these suburbs, which hold (as mentioned earlier) so many mosques; it is striking that although

<sup>23</sup> Cf. H. DZIECHCIŃSKA, *O staropolskich dziennikach...*, p. 53.

<sup>24</sup> A. NIEWIARA, *Wyobrażenia o narodach...*, p. 25.

there is not much in the new city, there is a lot to see everywhere else in the city and in the suburbs, all around, as far as the eye can see.

However, what seems most pertinent is the city's fortification, which is illustrated in numerous contexts, e.g. *O tym mieście o obronie jego, która jest wielka i strzelbą, i municją, że wiele ich pisze, ja zaniecham* (MR 212) [*Since so many have written about this city, its defense, which is mighty with guns and ammo, I shan't*]. In the analyzed diaries, the semiotic role of the city as a fortress is also established by the walls, e.g.

Z rumu znać, że miasto [Jerycho – RZ] to było wielkie, okrągłe, bo i teraz widzieć około, jako grobla, kędy mury się obaliły; a gdzie były wieże (które znać barzo gęsto), tam gromada większa rumu jako pagórek okrągły (MR 99).

The ruins suggest that the city [of Jericho – RZ] was huge and round, and even now if you look around, you can see how the walls collapsed like a levee; and where towers used to be (of which there were many), a larger pile of ruins forms a round hill;

the city gate, e.g.

przyjchaliśmy do Hieruzalem, gdzie wedle obyczaju u bramy Piscium stanęliśmy, a wtem niektórzy janczarowie, przez bramę Damascenam wjachwaszy, dali znać, że pielgrzymowie przyjchali (MR 49).

we arrived at Jerusalem, where as custom dictates, we stopped at the Fish Gate, when some Janissaries, having passed the Damascus Gate, gave a signal that the pilgrims had arrived,

Wchodząc w miasto Jerozolimę od wschodniej strony, z staradawna były rozne bramy, z których jedna znaczniejsza, to jest z góry Oliwnej do kościoła Salomonowego idąc, to jest Złota Brama, którą Pan do miasta w Niedzielę Kwietną wszedł z wielką ozdobą, do której był most sklepiasty przez przekop (AP 11).

Entering the city of Jerusalem from the east, there once were a number of gates, of which one was most significant, that is, coming from the Mount of Olives towards Solomon's Temple was the Golden Gate, which the Lord passed through with great adornment into the city on Palm Sunday, and which had a vaulted bridge over the dike;

or other ruins, e.g. *Tam teraz nic inszego nie masz, tylko mur pusty na cztery granie bez połapu i nakrycia* (AP 8) [*Now there is nothing there, only an empty four-ridge wall with no ceiling nor cover*].

The diarists also pay attention to how an agglomeration is situated, e.g. *Święte Jeruzalem siedzi na wysokiej górze naświętszej Syjonie, i idzie nieco na dół z góry od Wieczornika połudziennego* (AP 10) [*Holy Jerusalem sits atop the tall and holiest Mount Zion, and slopes downward a little from the southern Cenacle*], *miasto*



*egipskie, leży barzo cudnie nad Nilem i jest z pół mile dobre na dłużą* (MR 136) [the Egyptian city is located beautifully by the Nile and must be half a mile long]. The description of the location typically includes rather detailed information about the city's size, distance or population, e.g. *pierwsze miasto egipskie, leży barzo cudnie nad Nilem i jest z pół mile dobre na dłużą* (MR 136) [the first Egyptian city is located beautifully by the Nile and must be half a mile long],

to nowe miasto ma trzydzieści tysięcy domów, a z przedmieściami i starym miastem i Bulach że by miało być o dwakroć sto tysięcy, ulic szesnaście tysięcy, kościołów albo moschei z barzo wysokimi wieżami i cudnych [...] (MR 143).

this new city has thirty thousand houses, and with suburbs and the old city and Bulac it would be twice a hundred thousand, sixteen thousand streets, temples or mosques with very tall spires and marvelous [...].

The use of an extensive system of measures and weights is noteworthy because it indicates the degree of civilization of a Renaissance man<sup>25</sup>.

In the 16<sup>th</sup>-century diaries, particularly in Radziwiłł's vast text, the city can be considered in the context of a structural metaphor. In this role, it appears as a receptacle densely filled with buildings and covered with a road network. Efficient transportation was ensured by a more or less developed system of streets, tracts and paths, e.g.

Prawdziwie piszą o tym mieście [Kairze – RZ], że z wielką trudnością przez ulice się przecisnąć dla wielkości ludzi, którzy tak pieszo jako i na koniach jadą, a na mulicach jeżdżą (MR 159).

It is true what they write about this city [of Cairo – RZ] that it takes great effort for swarms of people to move down the streets, whether they travel on foot, by horse or mule,

Od strony zachodniej do kościoła idąc [w Jeruzolimie – RZ], jest ulica szeroka, mając z wierzchu sklepienie, które chodzą do kościoła, i zowią to Bramą Piękną (AP 11–12).

Coming from the west towards the temple [in Jerusalem – RZ], there is a wide paved street that takes you to the temple and is called the Beautiful Gate.

The urban squares also played an important role in organizing the tissue of the agglomerations visited by the author, e.g.

Widzieć też w pośrodku placu przed kościołem drzewo oliwne [w Jeruzolimie – RZ]; na tym miejscu (tak dzierżą) był ogień złożony, przy którym św. Piotr zaprzął się Pana Chrystusa (MR 61).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. H. DZIECHCIŃSKA, *O staropolskich dziennikach podróży...*, p. 50.

In the middle of the square opposite the temple, you can see an olive tree [in Jerusalem – RZ]; in this place (so they claim) a fire was laid by which St. Peter denied Lord Jesus Christ;

and bridges, which improved mobility around the urbanized space, e.g. *Od tego mostu poczyna się już Galilea, gdzie jeszcze trochę na początku skolisto* (MR 44) [*From this bridge on starts Galilea, which is still a little rocky at first*].

The markets were another vital point on the city map, and are rather frequently mentioned by Sierotka, e.g.

Był też wtenczas w Tripoli jakoby kiermasz przed miastem, gdzie ustawicznie Turków i Murzynów moc bywało; mieli jakieś ćwiczenia, skacząc, ale nic nie grzeszy. Drudzy jeno owoce osobne przedawali, bo tam tego aż nazbyt (MR 129).

At that time, there was a type of bazaar outside the city, always frequented by throngs of Turks and Blacks; they did some exercises, jumping but it was no good. Others only sold unusual fruits because it is abundant there.

According to researchers, noticing the economical aspects that stimulated the growth of an agglomeration is a significant novelty in the perception of urban organisms by the contemporary authors compared to the medieval period. On a wider scale, the commercial life in the city had not been noticed until the 17<sup>th</sup> century<sup>26</sup>. Hence, in this area, Sierotka appears as an innovative author, who managed to somewhat depart from the conventionalized templates dictated by the textbooks for describing urban spaces, which heavily concentrated on the architectural layout.

However, any comments Radziwiłł made about the cities' sacral and secular architecture were strongly formulaic. The role of an agglomeration seen through the lens of the metaphor where a city is a receptacle densely filled with buildings is visible in numerous contexts featuring temples important for various faiths, monasteries, houses of worship and burial sites, e.g. [...] *po prawej stronie jest kościół bardzo cudny Świętej Anny, matki Maryjej, matki Pana Jezusowej* (AP 12) [*on the right side, there is a most wonderful Church of Saint Anna, the Mother of Mary, Lord Jesus' Mother*], *W Betlejem jest kościół wielki Panny Maryjej, przy tym kościele klasztor, który trzymają mniszki z Hieruzalem* (JG 21) [*In Bethlehem, there is a great Church of Mother Mary, and a cloister with nuns from Jerusalem*], *Drugiego dnia byłem w klasztorze Św. Heliasza zakonu św. Franciszka, tamże mszej wysłuchawszy* (MR 19) [*On the second day, I went to St. Helius monastery, the order of St. Francis, where I listened to a mass*], *Widzieliśmy też groby królów francuskich [...] którzy Ziemię Świętą wzięli, a samo Hieruzalem 39 dnia po oblężeniu roku 1098 [...]. Są jeszcze i inszych pięć albo sześć grobów, na jedenże kształt wszystkie, ale z trudnością czytane być mogą dla dawności czasu* (MR 57) [*We also saw the graves of the French*

<sup>26</sup> Cf. *ibidem*, p. 46.

kings [...] who took the Holy Land and Jerusalem itself on the 39<sup>th</sup> day of the siege in 1098 [...]. There are five or six other graves, all the same shape, but difficult to read due to their ancientness].

Between the spheres of *sacrum* and *profanum*, in his diary, Radziwiłł mentions artwork located within the city space, e.g. *Niedaleko przed bramą w lewo na wysokiej górze jest kolumna Pompei, rzecz i cudna i dziwna* (MR 182) [*Near the gate, to the left, on a high mountain, there is Pompey's Pillar, both beautiful and strange*].

As far as the secular architecture goes, the 16<sup>th</sup>-century authors took notice of public use buildings (e.g. hospitals, guest houses, fountains), e.g.

Oględaliśmy szpital [w Damaszku – RZ], który Soliman, cesarz, zbudował wielkim kosztem, i dom gościnny, gdzie pielgrzymy, co do Mechy i stamtąd chodzą, przyjmują i strawują darmo przez trzy dni (MR 36).

We visited the hospital [in Damascus – RZ] built by Emperor Soliman at great expense and a guest house, where pilgrims traveling to Mecca can lodge for free for three days.

Radziwiłł, observing the unfamiliar reality from the point of view of a proprietor, also included in his diary comments from the area of architectural techniques, e.g.

Zupełnie cały [dom – RZ], sionka przy nim wąska, a sama salka na dole z ośm łokiet i wszerez, i wzdłuż, ale nie barzo jasnal z sionki wschodek na górę, gdzie jest altana, jako tam budują domy w tych krajach, bo dachów nie mają (MR 76).

An entire [house – RZ], with a narrow hallway, the room downstairs eight by eight ells, but without much light, from the hallway a step up to an arbor, because that is how they build houses in these countries, with no roofs.

In the analyzed texts, the lexemes *castle* and *palace* appear frequently, which stems from the presence of this type of secular architecture in old cities, e.g. *W nowym mieście [w Kairze – RZ] jest jednak barzo wiele pałaców cudnych i wielkim kosztem budowanych [...]* (MR 143) [*In the New City [of Cairo – RZ], there nevertheless is an abundance of magnificent palaces built at great expense [...]*].

An important novelty, compared to conventional descriptions dictated by school textbooks of rhetoric, was the fact that the diarists noticed the residents of the agglomerations and their living conditions. The role of a city as a place for living was presented in a variety of contexts, e.g.

Bo choć Damaszek miasto barzo ludne, wielkie (na dłużą kładą go dwie mili) i cudne, jednakże od morza daleko leży, a kupcy z Europy barzo rzadko tam bywają. Lud pospolity dziwnie chrześcijanom nie sprzyja, przeto janczarowie wzięli nas między się, żeśmy przy koniach szli. Skoro nas gmin obaczył, poczęli krzyzczyć, gwizdać, a zwłaszcza chłopięta, że się ze wszystkich ulic ludzie sypali, chcąc nas widzieć. A gdyśmy już przyszli między kramy, w ludniejsze ulice, ciskali za nami i plwali na nas, i, by nas byli janczarowie nie bronili, rozszarpaliby nas byli (MR 34).

Damascus is a very populous city, huge (two-miles long) and wonderful, but it is far away from the sea, and the merchants from Europe rarely visit it. The common people are strangely hostile to Christians, hence the Janissaries took us among themselves so we walked by their horses. Once the folk saw us, they began to shout, whistle, especially young boys, so throngs of people poured in from all streets, throwing things at us and spitting, and if the Janissaries had not protected us, they would have torn us to pieces.

Radziwiłł was interested in such aspects related to city life as: the water system, air quality, preparing meals, nutrition, clothing, etc., e.g.

Z tych podziemnych pałaców teraz wiele jest urobionych cystern, w których wodę chowają Nilową, która przez kanał do miasta idzie. [...] Powietrze tam, poczawszy od księżycy maja aż do pierwszego dżdżu w jesieni (bo w Aleksandrii bywa deszcz [...]) zawsze złe i prawie jako morowe (MR 187).

The underground palaces now make for cisterns where the Nile water is stored and distributed to the city through a canal [...] The air there, starting with the May moon to the first autumn rains (because Alexandria can have rain [...] is always bad and almost putrid.

The cities visited by the diarists appear as a conglomerate of nations, faiths and tribes, e.g.

Zatem Turcy otwierać kościół przyszli ku południowi, a myśmy też wyszli tak, jakośmy weszli, z zakonnikami i z drugimi, którzy ci to są: gdy pielgrzymowie wchodzą, tedy z nimi tamci chrześcijanie, którzy w Hieruzalem mieszkają wszystkich nacji, wcisną się, bo iż tam obecni, tedy dla nich nie otwierają kościoła (MR 58).

Hence, the Turks came to open the church around noon, and we entered as if we had arrived with the monks and the others who were: when pilgrims enter, those Christians of all nations living in Jerusalem wedge themselves in, because otherwise, they would not open the church for them.

The way these agglomerations' residents were perceived, how they lived and what relationships they had were marked by the author's viewpoint of a Christian, European and Pole. In this area, the diarists (Radziwiłł and Goryński) fell prey to stereotypes which were derived from the so-called imagination cliches accompanying an evaluative stage of categorizing certain nations<sup>27</sup>. The result was a pejorative view of the Turks, Arabs or Blacks, e.g. *zbójce Arabowie* (MR 143) [*rouge Arabs*].

The city's administrative body along with its interior organization play a crucial role in Radziwiłł's text, e.g. *Basza tam [w Kairze – RZ] jest starszym nad wszystkim królestwem* (MR 143) [*There [in Cairo – RZ] a pasha is the most superior authority*].

<sup>27</sup> A. NIEWIARA, *Wyobrażenia o narodach...*, p. 32.

The repertoire of linguistic means designed to create a city was somewhat dictated by the descriptive formula, which required that all agglomerations, despite their negative aspects, should be evaluated positively. Therefore, the city and its parts were usually pronounced as *cudne*, (*na*)*przedniejsze*<sup>28</sup> and accompanied by phrases indicating its size, e.g. *Miasto Betlejem jest napředniejsze* (AP 4) [*The city of Bethlehem is the finest*], *Nazajutrz mieliśmy trochę wiatru przeciwnego, jednak z wieczorem przyłynęliśmy do miasta Fua, które na brzegu leży; nie barzo wielkie, ale cudne* (MR 180) [*The next day we had some headwind, however, in the evening, we arrived at the city of Fua, which is located at the shore; not too big but marvelous*], *Przyjchaliśmy do Ramy [...] Znać, że miasto było wielkie i cudne, ale wszystko zburzone* (MR 120) [*We arrived at Rama [...] Visibly, the city used to be huge and marvelous, but now is all in ruins*], *Sachar miasto przedniejsze w Samarii* (MR 45) [*Sychar, one of Samaria's finest cities*]. Natural conditions of the cities' location were also positively evaluated, e.g. *miasto egipskie, leży barzo cudnie nad Nilem* (MR 136) [*the Egyptian city is located beautifully by the Nile*],

Z tej góry Damaszek widzieć dobrze, bo pod nią leży miasto, barzo długie, w cudnej i żywej wszelakimi owocami równinie (MR 34).

This mount offers a good view of Damascus, because there is a city underneath it, very long and nestled in a marvelous plain fertile with all types of fruits.

As a matter of fact, the adjective *cudny* is employed in reference to numerous other elements of the urban space, e.g.

Oględywałem obeliscum, który jest w mieście z kamienia czerwonego porphyte, granowity; wszędzie characteres hieroglyphici na nim są wykowane. Rzecz cudna i wysoka (MR 186).

I admired an obelisk which is in the city, made of red porphyry, angular; hieroglyphical characters chiseled all over it. A marvelous and tall thing.

The pool of adjectival modifiers describing individual cities in the diaries is rather limited and formulaic. Other adjectives that evaluated the agglomerations positively include *slawne*, *barzo obronne* [*famous, well-fortified*], e.g.

przyjchalem do Kanei, olim Cydonia, jeszcze nim bramę otworzono [...]. oględywałem miasto (przez wiele dni, bom tam dziewięć niedziel mieszkał). Jest barzo obronne i z portem (MR 215).

<sup>28</sup> *Cudny* 'very beautiful; perfect, extraordinary, exquisite; fine'; a) 'beautiful in its physical appearance'; b) 'perfect, fine, of superior quality; nice, pleasant'. Cf. *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku...* In reference to the entry *przedni*, in the 5<sup>th</sup> place, *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku...* notes the meaning 'distinguishing itself from others belonging to the same group, outstanding, superior in some respect'. These adjectives were often used in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century Polish language in a variety of contexts, regardless of their stylistic classification.

I had arrived at Kanea, formerly Cydonia, even before they opened the gates [...]. I examined the city (for many days because I stayed there for nine Sundays). It is well-fortified and has a port.

Modifiers with a negative emotional charge were used rarely and only in reference to certain living conditions in the city or some of its integral parts, e.g. *A iż powietrze w mieście [Aleksandrii – RZ] barzo złe lecie* (MR 183) [*And since in the city [of Alexandria – RZ] the air is very bad*].

To recapitulate, I would like to note the following facts. On the one hand, undoubtedly, the image of the city in the analyzed diaries was rather strongly influenced by the traditions of Antiquity, which was refreshed and sustained in the epoch of the Renaissance. This explains such roles of city centers as: a fortified walled-in space; an area of civilizational development juxtaposed with nature; a receptacle densely filled with secular and sacral buildings, covered with a road network and a grid of key points (fountains, monuments); and finally, an administrative structure. To illustrate the aforementioned aspects of how a 16<sup>th</sup>-century city operated, the authors employed a rather poor range of linguistic means: especially, repetitive adjectives, similes with references to places and phenomena known from the familiar European, and often Polish, reality. On the other hand, there are also attempts at departing from the formula and creating a contemporary image of the city. These are particularly visible in Radziwiłł's vast diary. The following roles of a city should be considered as products of the author's spontaneous reaction to encountering the unknown: an area dependent on the geographical and natural conditions (precisely measured and counted), a commercial and economic territory, a more or less hostile living location, a space where cultures and nations met.

The aspects of urban agglomerations that draw from an innovative worldview are largely the consequence of overlap of several forms of the author's anthropocentric viewpoint (of a proprietor, nobleman, Christian, European and Pole)<sup>29</sup>.

*Translated by Katarzyna Szuster-Tardi*

<sup>29</sup> It is worth contrasting the comments on the image of the city in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century diary literature with the observations about the vision of the city in later diaries (cf. E. UMIŃSKA-TYTOŃ, *Miasto widziane z okien dylżansu (na podstawie Itinerarium Jakuba Lanhausa z lat 1768–1769)*, [in:] *Zielonogórskie Seminaria Językoznawcze 2019. Dyskursy o przeszłości. Dyskursy w przeszłości*, ed. M. HAWRYSZ, M. JURWICZ-NOWAK, I. KOTLARSKA, Zielona Góra 2020, p. 211–221.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

- ANZELM POLAK, *Opisanie Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Antologia pamiętników polskich XVI wieku*, ed. R. POLLAK, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1966, p. 3–12.
- JAN GORYŃSKI, *Peregrynacja do Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Antologia pamiętników polskich XVI wieku*, ed. R. POLLAK, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1966, p. 13–29.
- MIKOŁAJ KRZYSZTOF RADZIWIŁŁ SIEROTKA, *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej, Syrii i Egiptu 1582–1584*, ed. L. KUKULSKI, Warszawa 1962.

### Secondary Literature

- Antologia pamiętników polskich XVI wieku*, ed. R. POLLAK, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków 1966.
- BARTMIŃSKI J., *Punkt widzenia, perspektywa, językowy obraz świata*, [in:] *Językowy obraz świata*, ed. J. BARTMIŃSKI, Lublin 1999, p. 103–120.
- BENEVOLO L., *The History of the City*, London 1980.
- CHEMPEREK D., *Podróż do Ziemi Świętej, Syrii i Egiptu Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki” – relacje konwertyty*, [in:] *Radziwiłłowie. Obrazy literackie. Biografie. Świadczenia historyczne*, ed. K. STĘPNIK, Lublin 2003, p. 39–48.
- DELFANTE C., *Grande histoire de la ville. De la Mésopotamie aux États-Unis*, Paris 1999.
- DZIECHCIŃSKA H., *O staropolskich dziennikach podróży*, Warszawa 1991.
- HERNAS C., *Barok*, Warszawa 1998.
- HOJKA Z., *Diariusz Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła Sierotki – pierwszy polski przewodnik po Ziemi Świętej i krajach Lewantu*, [in:] *Miasto jako przedmiot refleksji i fascynacji. Rozważania socjologiczne i historyczne*, ed. Z. HOJKA, K. WOJTYSIAK, D. DOMŻALSKI, Katowice 2015.
- KACZMAREK H., *Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki” podróż po starożytnym świecie (I. Bałkany i wyspy)*, “Balcanica Posnaniensia” 4, 1989, p. 343–351.
- KACZMAREK M., *Peregrynacje do Jerozolimy i Betlejem w XVI wieku w świetle diariuszy Anzelma Polaka, Jana Goryńskiego i Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki”*, [in:] *Ecclesia et homines. Instytucje i ludzie Kościoła w czasach Jagiellonów (XIV–XVI w.)*, ed. A. JANUSZEK-SIERADZKA, Sandomierz 2014.
- KURAN M., *Obraz ulic w miastach imperium osmańskiego w wybranych relacjach polskich podróżników z drugiej połowy XVI i pierwszej połowy XVII wieku*, “Litteraria Copernicana” 1, 2019, p. 19–40, <https://doi.org/10.12775/LC.2019.003>
- MĄCZAK A., *Życie codzienne w podróżach po Europie w XVI i XVII wieku*, Warszawa 1980.
- MUMFORD L., *The City in the History*, New York 1961.
- NIEWIARA A., *Wyobrażenia o narodach w pamiętnikach i dziennikach z XVI–XIX wieku*, Katowice 2000.
- PASZKOWSKI Z., *Historia idei miasta. Od antyku do renesansu*, Szczecin 2015.
- PIRENNE H., *Les villes du Moyen Âge*, Paris 2017.
- REJTER A., *Kształtowanie się gatunku reportażu podróżniczego w perspektywie stylistycznej i pragmatycznej*, Katowice 2000.
- ROTT D., *Staropolskie chorografie. Początki – rozwój – przemiany gatunku*, Katowice 1995.

- SKUBALANKA T., *Językowa kreacja Jacka Soplicy (Księdza Robaka)*, [in:] T. SKUBALANKA, *Mickiewicz, Słowacki, Norwid. Studia nad językiem i stylem*, Lublin 1997, p. 20–33.
- Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku*, vol. I–XXXIV, ed. M.R. MAYENOWA, F. PEPŁOWSKI, Wrocław 1966–1994; vol. XXXV to the entry ROWNY, ed. K. MROWCEWICZ, P. POTONIEC, Warszawa 1995–.
- UMIŃSKA-TYTOŃ E., *Miasto widziane z okien dyliżansu (na podstawie Itinerarium Jakuba Lanhausa z lat 1768–1769)*, [in:] *Zielonogórskie Seminaria Językoznawcze 2019. Dyskursy o przeszłości. Dyskursy w przeszłości*, ed. M. HAWRYSZ, M. JUREWICZ-NOWAK, I. KOTLARSKA, Zielona Góra 2020, p. 211–221.
- ZARĘBSKI R., *Językowe sposoby osławiania egzotycznej rzeczywistości w „Podróży do Ziemi Świętej, Syrii i Egiptu” Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki”*, [in:] *Pogranicza*, ed. D. KOWALSKA, Łódź 2007, p. 753–766.
- ZARĘBSKI R., *Onomastykon szesnastowiecznych relacji z podróży do Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Nazwy własne a społeczeństwo*, vol. II, ed. R. ŁOBODZIŃSKA, Łask 2010, p. 497–510.
- ZINKOW L., *Wenecja na trasie peregrynacji Mikołaja Krzysztofa Radziwiłła „Sierotki” do Egiptu i Ziemi Świętej*, [in:] *Terra Culturae. Obszary, transfery i recepcje kultury. Studia oraz szkice o kulturze i historii*, ed. Ł. BURKIEWICZ, Kraków 2018, p. 143–156.

**Abstract.** The article tries to describe the linguistic creation of a city in Polish 16<sup>th</sup>-century diaries from journeys to the Holy Land. During long trips, the authors visited many exotic, for the Polish traveller, cities and towns to whom they devoted a lot of space in their diaries. The analysis is based on findings of theory of linguistic image of a world and on the concept of linguistic creation and semiotic role. The author outlines the set of linguistic means used by the diarists to indicate various roles. He concludes that the image of a city presented in the analysed texts oscillates between traditional frame that has its source in the classical antiquity and modern perspective significant for the man of the Renaissance.

**Keywords:** city, language creation, Polish diaries, XVI century, Holy Land

**Rafał Zarębski**

University of Lodz  
Faculty of Philology  
Institute of Polish Philology and Speech Therapy  
ul. Pomorska 171/173  
90-236 Łódź, Polska/Poland  
rafal.zarebski@uni.lodz.pl