

The Earliest Harbingers of Polish Humanism in the Golden Autumn of the Jagiellonian Middle Ages

It is well known that the first indigenous Humanists (or perhaps pre-humanists) started to appear in Poland sporadically at approximately the turn of the 1420s and 30s, as an outcome of the intellectual stimuli effected during and after the conciliar period and visits by Italians to Poland on political business. The initial years for Humanism in Poland were thus the early 1430s. One of the most interesting of these overtures, as far as we are able to ascertain today, was an event later recorded and commended by Callimachus, the university lectures delivered at Cracow on Virgil's *Bucolics*, in an undoubtedly pioneering undertaking by the young Grzegorz of Sanok (Gregorius Sanocensis, Sanoceus). This may have occurred already in 1433 (?), but certainly must have been accomplished by "early 1439." There is no longer any serious objection to the credibility of such suppositions,¹ especially in view of the fact that within a time-span of no more than two years, around 1435, we encounter the first plans formulated by Cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki, Chancellor and guardian of the University, to modernise its teaching syllabus, especially in the preliminary stage of studies, in the Faculty of Arts. He would not, in fact, implement these changes until the reform of 1449, when the Faculty of Arts "became the major focus of concern"² for its reformer, who purposefully placed a new and important challenge for this Faculty in the field of culture and ideas.

From the very earliest stages of Polish Humanism the individuals we come up against are most frequently not very far removed from, or di-

¹ See the objection of J. Fijałek in his fundamental monograph, *Mistrz Jakub z Paradyża i Uniwersytet Krakowski w okresie soboru bazylejskiego*, vol. I (Kraków, 1900), 232–235. Cf. *Materiały z sesji naukowej [...] 500-lecia zgonu Grzegorza z Sanoka*, ed. F. Kiryk, *Rocznik Sanocki V* (1980), passim.

² I. Zarębski, "Okres wczesnego humanizmu," in *Dzieje Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego w latach 1364–1764*, ed. K. Lepszy, vol. I (Kraków, 1964), 173.

rectly associated with the great figure of Zbigniew Oleśnicki, in whose intellectual milieu a number of highly interesting, and remarkable personalities may be observed. One was Stanisław Ciołek, a voivode's son just a few years older than Oleśnicki, an elegant stylist of Latin and author of a poem in praise of Cracow, who was also a spirited and occasionally all too keenly satirising pamphleteer. Ciołek died in 1437 as Bishop of Poznań, but on many occasions must certainly have been close in his ideas to Oleśnicki, especially after the Battle of Grunwald and during his first period in office as Vice-Chancellor, when time and again he would manifest the personal traits marking this new class of literary men.³ Another early Humanist was Ciołek's contemporary, Mikołaj of Kozłów (Kozłowski) of the arms of Lis (d. 1443), an outstanding theologian and Oleśnicki's representative at the Council of Basel. Kozłowski established a reputation as a preacher and speaker at international events. In July 1434 at Basel he delivered the obituary oration during the memorial service for Vladislaus Jagiełło;⁴ at Basel, too, he preached an official homily, in the *speculum* vein, on St. Stanislaus as a model of the good and courageous pastor. As an academic Kozłowski was well-versed not only in theology, but also in the writings of the Ancients and of the early Humanists. Moreover, he became the owner of an extremely valuable collection of manuscript codices, including the works of Petrarch,⁵ but also

³ See in particular J. Caro, *Liber cancellariae Stanislai Ciołek. Ein Formelbuch der polnischen Königskanzlei aus der Zeit der husitischen Bewegung* (Wien, 1871), 319–545; and B. Ulanowski, *Liber formularum ad jus polonicum necnon canonicum spectantium...* (Kraków, 1893); also S.H. Badeni, "Stanisław Ciołek, biskup poznański..." *Rozprawy Wydziału Filozoficznego AU* [hereinafter *RWF AU*] XXXIX (Kraków, 1900), 296–399; T. Tyc, "S. Ciołek a zabytki literackie w formularzach polskich," in *Z dziejów kultury w Polsce średniowiecznej* (Poznań, 1924); E. Maleczyńska, "Ciołek Stanisław," *Polski słownik biograficzny* [hereinafter *PSB*] IV (Kraków, 1938), 82 ff.; *Biblioteka literatury polskiej "Nowy Korbut,"* [hereinafter *N. Korbut*] Warszawa (PAN) II: *Piśmiennictwo staropolskie* (1964), 99 ff., with contributions by A. Prochaska, S.H. Badeni, R. Gansiniec, and others; H. Kowalewicz, "Twórczość liryczna S. Ciołka," *Eos* LXV (1977): 151–162; Z. Kowalska, *Stanisław Ciołek († 1437), podkanclerzy królewski, biskup poznański, poeta dworski* (Kraków, 1993).

⁴ M. Markowski, "Mikołaj z Kozłowa," in *Materiały i Studia Zakładu Historii Filozofii Starożytnej i Średniowiecznej V* (Warszawa, 1965), 76–141; W. Szelińska, *Biblioteki profesorów Uniwersytetu Krakowskiego w XV i początkach XVI w.* (Wrocław, 1966), 44–50, 289; minor remarks in: Z. Włodek, "Krakowski komentarz z XV w. do *Sentencji* Piotra Lombarda," *Studia Mediewistyczne VII* (1966): 125–355; M. Zwiercan, "Kozłowski Mikołaj," *PSB XV*, 26–38; S. Dobrzański, "Kozłowski Mikołaj herbu Lis," *Słownik Polskich Teologów Katolickich, Lexicon Theologorum Catholicorum Poloniae*, vol. II, ed. H.E. Wyczawski (Warszawa, 1982), 384–386; K. Biedrowska-Ochmańska and J. Ochmański, *Władysław Jagiełło w opiniach swoich współczesnych: próba charakterystyki* (Poznań, 1987), 17–21; Z. Pietrzyk, *Poczet rektorów Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego 1400–2000* (Kraków, 2000), 33.

⁵ The earlier hints, chiefly from K. Morawski and J. Fijałek, were followed by N. Coni-tieri, *Petrarca in Polonia e altri studi*, ed. G. Maver (Roma, 1966), 13 ff. See also G. Billano-

Seneca, Lactantius and several other authors, which he left as a legacy to the University of Cracow, with which he had strong personal ties.

Next we have to consider Mikołaj Lasocki of the arms of Dołęga, some ten years Kozłowski's junior, Dean of the Cathedral Chapter of Cracow and a relative of Paulus Włodkowic. Having been appointed to the See of Cuiavia but not having taken up this office, Lasocki died quite suddenly in 1450 of the plague at Terni in Umbria, the reputed birthplace of Tacitus; and was buried in Camerino Cathedral, but his grave can "no longer be identified" there. Lasocki was a well-trained lawyer, orator, and expert in the affairs of the Teutonic Knights. He had acquired his political education and experience in the top ranks of the Chancellery at Cracow, under Ciołek and Oleśnicki. Having built up a thorough acquaintance of Italian intellectual life during his numerous travels to and around that country, for nearly a quarter-century Lasocki was an established Polish Humanist diplomat, who was respected in the Roman Curia and enjoyed an extensive network of contacts and relations throughout Italy, in the conciliar environment of Basel, and also in France and Hungary – in the last-mentioned country he declined the office of primate! – and earned himself the personal goodwill of Pope Martin V.⁶ He was "the most trusted counsellor and confidant" of the young King Vladislaus (*omnium actionum suarum secretus et fidelis consiliarius*), and was present on the battlefield at Varna. The views he held were close to those of Cardinal Cesarini, to the extent that he was even indirectly blamed afterwards as one of those responsible for the defeat. But as regards his Early Renaissance links with Italy, he was in personal contact with Giovanni Aurispa, Poggio Bracciolini, Pier Paolo Vergerio the Elder and Enea Silvio Piccolomini; and above all with the Humanist tutor, Guarino Guarini da Verona, who was particularly interested in the Jagiellonian countries, Poland and Hungary. Lasocki entrusted Guarino with the education of his nephews, as evidenced by a set of surviving letters in Latin to Guarino, the earliest private correspondence we know of between an Italian Humanist and a Pole,⁷ with a series of details relating not only to

vich, "Nuovi autografi (autentici) e vecchi autografi (falsi) del Petrarca," *Italia Medievale e Umanistica* XXII (Padova, 1979): 224–227; and *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum Medii Aevi Latinorum qui in Bibliotheca Jagellonica Cracoviae asservantur [...]*, III (Kraków, 1984), 249–250.

⁶ Z. Lasocki, *Un diplomate polonais au Congrès d'Arras en 1435* (Paris, 1928); T. Witczak, "Lasocki Mikołaj herbu Dołęga," *PSB* XVI, 542–544; J. Kozicka, "Mikołaj Lasocki," *Materiały do Historii Filozofii Średniowiecznej w Polsce* IV (XV) (Wrocław, 1971), 41–71; also W. Zahorski, *Polak we Włoszech* (Roma, 1983, 5th ed.), 288 (on Lasocki's grave).

⁷ An important observation was made by J. Brüstigerowa in "Guarino a Polska," *Kwartalnik Historyczny* XXXIX (Lwów, 1925), 70, that Guarino's earliest letters to Lasocki were dat-

Lasocki's friends at Rome but also to the "fairly numerous Polish student colony"⁸ in that city in the years 1447–1450 (as discovered by Barycz).

But if in this synthetic overview we are obliged now to gloss over some personages – for instance Jan Elgot of the arms of Wieniawa, an eminent lawyer specialising in decretals, rector of the university and respected orator, a relative of Długosz; and even (for the time being at least), Jan of Ludzisko; Jan of Inowrocław (the Elder); and Jan Dąbrówka, who had a good comprehensive knowledge of ancient, mediaeval, and contemporary writings;⁹ along with Sędziwoj (Sandivogius) of Czechło, who attended the Councils of Ferrara and Basel;¹⁰ and finally Piotr Gaszowiec, another Humanist rector of the university who was also an astronomer and royal physician and had obtained his doctor's degree in medicine in Italy;¹¹ and others – it is to devote deserved attention to the primary figure, the already-mentioned Bishop of Cracow and Lord Chancellor of the Realm of Poland, Cardinal Zbigniew Oleśnicki of the arms of Dębno (1389–1455), a titular prelate in Rome at Santa Prisca on the Aventine.

Oleśnicki was an outstanding statesman: although he had never studied in Italy himself, he had been to Rome and modelled his style on the Classical authors, especially Cicero, and the Humanists. But the major contribution of lasting importance that he would make was the fundamental role of creative patron and magnanimous guiding spirit, especially for the University of Cracow, in which he founded the Bursa Hierusalem, and for the writing of national history. Deeply aware of the cultural needs of the age, Oleśnicki acted as maecenas to the new intellectual trends which found their expression through men in his entourage. He was the gracious protector of scholars, including visitors and guests, such as the somewhat mysterious Greek Demetrios (could this really have been the young Chalkondylas?), who is said to have come to Poland from Basel (?) and in 1439 left an account of how delighted he was with Cracow and his stay there.¹² Zbigniew Oleśnicki was also

ed 1436, and were thus all the more interesting as the earliest known Humanist letters from Italy to Poland. Hitherto the main link between Italy and Poland had been the Roman Curia, quite understandably.

⁸ Cf. H. Barycz, *Polacy na studiach w Rzymie w epoce Odrodzenia (1440–1600)* (Kraków, 1938), 24–35, which gives a bibliography of the earlier works on the subject.

⁹ Barycz, "Dąbrówka (z Dąbrówki), Jan," *PSB* V, 26–28; K. Ożóg, *Uczni w monarchii Jagdwiگی andegaweńskiej i Władysława Jagiełły (1384–1434)* (Kraków, 2004), 111–118.

¹⁰ W. Drelicharz, "Sędziwój z Czechła herbu Korab," *PSB* XXXVI, 394–399; J. Wiesiołowski, "Sędziwój z Czechła," *Studia Źródłoznawcze* IX (Warszawa, 1964), 75–104.

¹¹ A. Birkenmajer, "Gaszowiec Piotr," *PSB* VII, 294 ff.

¹² Noted by Morawski, *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego. Wieki średnie i Odrodzenie*, vol. I (Kraków, 1900), 391–393; more details in A.F. Grabski, *Polska w opiniach Europy Zachodniej XIV–XV w.* (Warszawa, 1968), 54; cf. K. Müllner, *Reden und Briefe italienischer*

the recipient of a series of widely-known Humanist letters, including a few that are extremely courteous and astonishingly full of compliments, penned by Enea Silvio Piccolomini.¹³ Finally Oleśnicki extended his patronage efficiently and far-sightedly over Polish homiletics in Wawel Cathedral, the principal church in the kingdom: a sermon was delivered in Polish over the coffin of Vladislaus Jagiełło by Master Paweł of Zator, a Doctor of Decretals.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, after his death Oleśnicki was remembered in a host of laudatory epitaphs in a now definitively Humanist Latin poetry, composed especially in the Cracovian milieu. An instructive example is offered by a 375-stanza hexameter dialogue in Latin on Zbigniew Oleśnicki, maintained in the Virgilian spirit “derived from the Early Renaissance tradition of the Italian funerary bucolic,”¹⁵ preserved in manuscript form.

Humanisten (Wien, 1899), 73. Grabski cites the humanist remarks of A. Brenta (1480), stressing that Chalkondylas “legatus [?] in Sauromatas Scythas [viz. Jagiellonian Poland and perhaps further] profectus, esse civitatem illic longe nobilissimam et potentissimam, in qua ita verba nostratia sonant, ut nihil suavius sit quam illos antiquo more Romano loquentes audire.” Interestingly, we do not have much information on Chalkondylas’ early years, before he settled in Italy (G. Cammelli, *I dotti bizantini e le origini dell’Umanesimo*, vol. III: *Demetrio Calcondila* (Firenze, 1954), 6 ff.); the remarks might have been made by any one of several Demetrioses.

¹³ Cf. his letter of 23rd February 1450 from Wiener-Neustadt (*Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, ed. R. Wolkan (Wien, 1912), 159): “vincor abs te, cedo tibi, cedo tuis litteris, que non ex Polonia sed ex ipsis Athenis transivisse videtur. Scripsi nonnunquam ego in Polonia nec, quid scriberem, satis adverti. Non existimabam, aquilonares homines litterarum sequi delitias. Deceptus sum et apud multos fortasse derisus. Nam si diligenter et accurate scribere iure nunc condemnor, que mei existimatio potest fieri temere suscipiens calamum? Non minores, ut tue docent littere, Polonorum sunt quam Italarum munditie. Commendanda natio et in celum laudibus offerenda Polonorum, qui quamvis ad Italiam, ubi nunc est facundie saturigo, medios habent vel Theutones vel Hungaros, prius tamen quam illi fontem adierunt limpidissimisque potati limphis splendorem eloquentie domum retulerunt [...]” – See also I. Zarebski, *Stosunki Eneasza Sylwiusza z Polską i Polakami* (Kraków, 1939), idem, “Okres wczesnego humanizmu”..., vol. I, 152, and W. Buchowiecki, *Handbuch der Kirchen Roms. Der römische Sakralbau in Geschichte und Kunst von der altchristlichen Zeit bis zur Gegenwart*, vol. III (Wien, 1974), 629–649.

¹⁴ The sermon mentions Oleśnicki’s foundation of a special benefice in the Cathedral, the first holder of which was Paweł of Zator. See Morawski, *Historia Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego...*, vol. I, 465–466; J. Starnawski, “Nieznany list Zbigniewa Oleśnickiego o przyjęciu przez Władysława [...] korony węgierskiej (1440),” *Roczniki Humanistyczne KUL* VII, 2 (Lublin, 1960), 334, 336 (with a mention of a translation of the sermon by the Bishop of Szeged for Vladislaus’ Hungarian coronation); J. Wolny, “Paweł z Zatora,” *PSB* XXV, 401 ff.; J. Lachendro, “Udział Ziemi Oświęcimsko-Zatorskiej w kulturze umysłowej polskiego renesansu,” *Cracovia litterarum. Kultura umysłowa i literacka Krakowa i Małopolski w dobie Renesansu: księga zbiorowa Międzynarodowej Sesji Naukowej w czterechsetlecie zgonu Jana Kochanowskiego (w Krakowie, 10–13 października 1984 r.)*, ed. T. Ulewicz (Kraków, 1991), passim.

¹⁵ S. Zabłocki, *Od prerenesansu do oświecenia. Z dziejów inspiracji klasycznych w litera-*

The diffusion of the elements of Humanism into Poland was neither a simple nor a straightforward process – for a number of reasons. A particularly significant illustration of these matters is provided by Jan of Ludzisko (b. ca. 1400, d. before 1460), who probably came from a rural background. Having completed the standard preliminary course of study at Cracow and subsequently supplemented his domestic Master of Arts degree with a Paduan doctorate in Medicine in 1433, this scholar was appointed in 1440 to a chair at Cracow and for several years was the University's official orator. He made a brilliant start in this office, at the very beginning of his academic career, with a strikingly Humanist oration *De Laudibus et Dignitate Eloquentiae et Oratoriae Scientiae*, with a follow-up in a speech of welcome jointly delivered in the same year (1440) with Jakub of Paradyż on the return of the delegates from the Council of Basel (*Oratio ad Marcum Bonfilium et Stanislaum de Sobnyow Legatos Concilii Basiliensis*). Later he produced eloquent recommendations of the practical and moral advantages to be gained from the study of philosophy, and in 1447, on the University's behalf, delivered an address of welcome to the new monarch, Casimir the Jagiellonian, which is still remembered today largely for its social accents set within the general *speculum* theme of the ideal prince; today often oversimplified and misrepresented. He received his literary training in Italy, most probably in the schools of G. Barzizza and Guarino da Verona, but also had a large stock of transcripts made in his own hand of the contemporary rhetorical models and formulae, of which around fifty have come down to us. He followed them so closely that "often he would incorporate whole sections in his own speeches."¹⁶ In *De Laudibus et Dignitate Eloquentiae et Oratoriae Scientiae*, which at one time was believed to have been the "first official appearance of Humanism in Cracow"¹⁷ (but in fact Sanoceus' lectures preceded it), he declared in a rather didactic manner:

Neque dubito multos esse, qui haec humanitatis officia negligunt, immo, quod turpius est, vituperant; quod hac forte de causa accidit, ut quoniam ipsi ea tarditate

turze polskiej (Warszawa, 1976), 78. The Latin text was published from the manuscript by L. Piotrowicz, "Dialog o Zbigniewie Oleśnickim," *Archiwum do Dziejów Literatury i Oświaty w Polsce* II (Kraków, 1882), 325–362. See also the presentation in *N. Korbut* (1963) I, 202 ff.; and Zabłocki, *Polsko-łacińskie epicedium renesansowe na tle europejskim* (Wrocław, 1968), 81 ff.; with a comprehensive account in M. Koczerska, "Oleśnicki Zbigniew," *PSB* XXIII, 776–784; and J. Nikodem, *Zbigniew Oleśnicki w historiografii polskiej* (Kraków, 2001), 28–57.

¹⁶ B. Nadolski, "Jan z Ludziska," *PSB* X, 461; and especially idem, *Jan z Ludziska, pionier Odrodzenia w Polsce* (Inowrocław, 1977); as well as B. Biliński, "Polskie tradycje naukowe w Rzymie," part 1, *Przegląd Humanistyczny* VII (Warszawa, 1963), fasc. 3, 42.

¹⁷ Fijałek, *Mistrz Jakub z Paradyża...*, vol. I, 231 ff.; idem, *Polonia apud Italos scholastica, saeculum XV*, fasc. I (Kraków, 1900), 78, 83.

sunt ingenii, ut nihil altum neque egregium valeant intueri et, cum etiam ad nullam eloquentiae minimam partem ascendere possint, nec alios quidem ad id ascendisse vellent. Sed hos cum eorum ignorantia relinquamus, vilipendamus, parvipendamus, quorum puerilem opinionem [...] etc.¹⁸

What gives these observations a juicier flavour is the indiscreet disclosure made by modern research that Jan of Ludzisko allowed his elocution to be a rather slavish rehash of the well-known introduction by Leonardo Bruni to St. Basil's homily addressed to the young of "the advantages that may be drawn from the pagan Greek authors" – an important text both in patristic and Renaissance writings.¹⁹ But we should not describe such behaviour – copying from, or perhaps assisting (?) one's own creativity for public performance, with fairly mechanical culling from texts by Italians regarded at the time as the standards modelled on the Classical masters – as something out of the ordinary. This type of practice had frequently been applied earlier, e.g. in poetry in centos or centones, individual selections or compilations especially from Homer or Virgil, a popular and widespread genre in Antiquity and later also in the Latin West as well as in Byzantium in the Middle Ages.

Finally, to round off these observations on the initial phase of Poland's Italianate or Italophile Early Renaissance connections in the Oleśnicki period, we should note that towards the end of the Cardinal's life, in 1449, a reform was introduced in the University of Cracow whereby the study of the major writers of Antiquity was made a regular part of the curriculum. Of the poets this meant chiefly Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Terence, Statius, and perhaps others as well, Propertius, Tibullus, and Martial, later on even Plautus.²⁰ The prose-writers were headed by Cicero on rhetoric, and Quintilian with *De Institutione Oratoria* (in the full version, which was rediscovered by Poggio at the time of the Council of Constance), along with Valerius Maximus and *Factorum Dictorumque Memorabilium Libri IX* etc.

This, roughly, was the way in which the intellectual developments and patterns introduced by Oleśnicki continued to expand after his death, too

¹⁸ Quotation after Fijałek, *Mistrz Jakub z Paradyża...*, I, 239 (also quoted in Biliński, *Tradizioni italiane all'Università Jagellonica di Cracovia* (Roma-Warszawa, 1967) vol. I, 34. For the full text of the oration see Ioannis de Ludzisko *Orationes*, ed. H.S. Bojarski, *Bibliotheca Latina Medii et Recentioris Aevi XIX* (Wrocław, 1971), 31–47 (the cited passage is on p. 42). A full Polish translation is available in *Wybór mów staropolskich*, ed. Nadolski (Wrocław, 1961), 3–22.

¹⁹ Biliński, *Tradizioni italiane...*, 35.

²⁰ Zarębski, "Okres wczesnego humanizmu"..., 173–175; a marginal remark also in M. Kowalczyk, *Krakowskie mowy uniwersyteckie z pierwszej połowy XV wieku* (Wrocław, 1970).

– chiefly in places in Lesser Poland and, naturally enough, in the ecclesiastic and university environment, but with time they spread further afield, nationwide, through the provincial aristocratic courts, which proved the most responsive to the spirit and atmosphere of the age. Suffice it to mention Cardinal Oleśnicki's two nephews, both of whom were educated in the Humanist mode from the very start. First Jakub of Sienna, son of Dobiesław of Oleśnica, of the arms of Dębno, who died in 1480 as Archbishop of Gniezno, an ecclesiastic and politician who had studied in Italy, acquiring an intimate knowledge of the country and establishing close relations with its people. In November 1459 at Mantua Jakub gave a diplomatic retort, in the presence of Pius II (Enea Silvio Piccolomini), to some proposals put forward in favour of the Teutonic Order – by suggesting the Order be transported out to the Island of Tenedos, and established there – next door to the Turks!²¹ Jakub was the only Pole to be endowed by the Pope with the leasehold of the town and castle of Tivoli, and that at a difficult period in his life. He was also a distinguished long-standing patron of the arts, a bibliophile and the founder and guardian of several public initiatives. The Cardinal's second nephew was Zbigniew Oleśnicki the Younger (died 1493), son of Jan Głowacz, Voivode of Sandomierz. Just as his illustrious namesake, he, too, was a senior churchman, Vice-Chancellor of the Realm, and finally Metropolitan Archbishop of Gniezno and Primate.²²

No doubt more of these élite circles could be enumerated, some even quite remote from the capital, beyond Lesser Poland, as described in Callimachus' widely-disseminated, perhaps somewhat inflated, literary news of the court at Dunajów of Grzegorz of Sanok, Archbishop of Lwów, in the 1460s. All the more so as the only texts and material testimonials we have available on Grzegorz of Sanok, who must have enjoyed good opportunities for collecting Italian books since he was the personal acquaintance of figures like Vergerio the Elder, are all Cracovian, or Cracow-derived manuscripts. Among them there is a semi-official Humanist educational treatise *De Institutione Principis*, dated around 1467, which was rediscovered in the 20th century in the collections of the Berlin Deutsche Staatsbibliothek (!) that had been moved to Tübingen during the Second World War.²³ This paraenetic treatise, penned in Latin but, like the

²¹ S. Smolka, *Szkice historyczne* (Warszawa, 1883), 257–283; J. Friedberg, "Zatarg Polski z Rzymem w czasie wojny trzynastoletniej," *Kwartalnik Historyczny* XXIV (1910): 427 ff., 447 ff.; Zarębski, "Stosunki Eneasza Sylwiusza...", 91; F. Kiryk, "Jakub z Sienna," *PSB* X, 364–367; B. Przybyszewski, "Spotkanie ze świętym Kazimierzem," *Analecta Cracoviensia* XVI (1984): 97 ff.

²² Z. Sułkowska-Kurasiowa, "Oleśnicki Zbigniew z Oleśnicy, herbu Dębno (ok. 1430–1493)," *PSB* XXIII, 784–786.

²³ Zarębski, "Z dziejów recepcji humanizmu w Polsce. Pierwszy w literaturze polskiej traktat pedagogiczny," *Studia z dziejów kultury polskiej ku czci S. Kota* (Kraków, 1949), 14–171.

oration of Jan of Ludzisko, not very original (a local paraphrase of Enea Silvio Piccolomini's *De Liberorum Educatione*), nevertheless gives a good idea of the prevailing cultural atmosphere at Court in Cracow.

This paraphrase, produced anonymously but certainly by a local (though perhaps not Polish) familiar of the Court, was dedicated specifically to an exceptional addressee: the nine-year-old Prince Casimir, a saintly young man who would eventually be canonised. Prince Casimir was born in 1458 as the second son of Casimir IV and his consort, Elisabeth of Austria (house of Habsburg), "Mother of the Jagiellons," a queen who left an affectionate memory in Polish history and must have known Enea Silvio from the Imperial Court, where she herself, an orphan, had received rather ungracious treatment from the more fortunate members of her family. In Cracow, on the other hand, in her husband's family to whom she was distantly related through her mother's line, she was made to feel at home, and here she did much to build up the Jagiellonian dynastic tradition – to which she contributed six sons and five daughters.

So much for the chief figures in the Polish Early Renaissance, though we should bear in mind that we cannot close the issue or move on to later events without at least a general remark on yet one more personality of special rank: that of the indefatigable historian Jan Długosz (Długossius, Latinised as Longinus, 1415–1480) of the arms of Wieniawa, diplomat and envoy, tutor to the King's sons. Długosz is important here not so much for the inestimable value of his life's work, as for his own intellectual position and outlook, a key to the understanding of Polish culture.

This outstanding personality – a historiographer's perpetuation of the ideological and political position held by his master Oleśnicki – was overtly suspicious (or maybe just apprehensive?) of Humanism and the Humanists, although appearances might occasionally have suggested otherwise. But then he was never very fond of mediaeval scholastic philosophy, either, although it cannot be denied he had as much training in the field as was required. At the same time he was a close and loyal friend of Mikołaj Lasocki, which is significant in view of the large age

(The Communist censorship office removed the final words of the book's title, suppressing the information that it was a festschrift in honour of the émigré Stanisław Kot); idem, "Najwcześniejszy humanistyczny polski traktat pedagogiczny (około 1467)," in *Dzieśięciolecie Wyższej Szkoły Pedagogicznej w Krakowie* (Kraków, 1957), 151–178. Incidentally also in J. Garbaciak, "Elżbieta Rakuszanka," *PSB* VI, 251.

difference between them;²⁴ and analogously, also of the eminent theologian, academic and Humanist, Sędziwoj of Czechło (c. 1410–1476), a few years his senior and owner of a now extremely valuable codex of transcripts of the *Chronicle* of Gallus Anonymus, the *Life of St. Stanislaus*, and Marco Polo's *Description of the World*.²⁵ In particular, and by no means by chance, it was Długosz who corresponded on behalf of his master Oleśnicki with prominent persons like Piccolomini, whom he even had occasion to meet personally, perhaps several times.²⁶ What he found irksome about Enea Silvio was the latter's partiality towards Germans, which sometimes went hand in hand with a disfavour of Poles, albeit personally he received numerous diplomatic courtesies and tokens of Piccolomini's acknowledgement. Quite naturally, Długosz constantly met Italian Humanists in the Court circles of Cracow, and also during his periods abroad. In literature his encounters with Humanists were uninterrupted. He had a high esteem for their intelligence and Neo-Classical Latinity²⁷ – even if he could not fully trust them as individuals (this applies especially to Callimachus, who curried his favour in an obvious way with his dedications of poetry, and perhaps prose as well²⁸); even if he found the cultural trend of the times too self-assertive. He took a stance against this vogue, especially in his later years (in Book XII of his *Annals*), censuring his fellow-countrymen for their corrupted manners, their foreign attire and hair-styles, and their excessive attention to materialism; but was not too successful, it seems, in deploring a wind of change from the position of the *passé*.

Moreover it should not be forgotten that he acquired a personal, direct and probably comprehensive knowledge of Italy through his journeys there, especially on diplomatic business and during his three sojourns there. While visiting other monuments which meant far more to him, he must also have stopped at the tomb of Dante at Ravenna, as he

²⁴ M. Bobrzyński and S. Smolka, *Jan Długosz, jego życie i stanowisko w piśmiennictwie* (Kraków, 1893), 39–41.

²⁵ Wiesiołowski, "Sędziwój z Czechła," *Studia Źródłoznawcze* IX (1964): 75–104; idem, *Kolekcje historyczne w Polsce średniowiecznej XIV–XV wieku* (Wrocław, 1967), 98–135.

²⁶ See Długosz's already cited letter; also the observations by H. Zeissberg, *Dziejopisarstwo polskie wieków średnich*, vol. II (Warszawa, 1877), 27 ff., a supplement to the work of G. Voigt on Enea Silvio; also Zarewski, "Stosunki Eneasza Sylwiusza..." 39–48; and the collective volume *Jan Długosz w pięćsetną rocznicę śmierci*, ed. F. Kiryk (Olsztyn, 1983).

²⁷ Cf. Długosz's remarks from his letter of dedication to Oleśnicki: "Novi enim delicata nostre etatis hominum ingenia, que nil probant, nisi quod Tullianam, a qua longe mihi abesse videor, representant venustatem; novi et invidios, qui [...]" (I. Długossii, *Annales seu Cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae* I (Warszawa, 1964), 54).

²⁸ T. Wierzbowski, "Filipa Kallimacha i nieznanego poety wiersze na cześć Jana Długosza," *RWF AU* VIII (Kraków, 1880), 296–313.

implied in the warm and even quite detailed remark he conscientiously recorded about the poet and his work for 1321.²⁹ He made other, parallel, incidental notes alongside this one on Polish-Italian relations and current affairs, not just on ecclesiastic and pontifical matters, but also quite independent ones, such as the details of the unilateral submission of the Genoese colony of Caffa in the Crimea made to Casimir the Jagiellonian, imploring his protection against the Turk (*pro tuenda civitate Caffensi a Teucro*);³⁰ although – in view of the egoistic indifference of the West – it was too late to save Caffa from capture and destruction by the Turks (June 1475). However, the point itself offers an illustrative supplement to the fact that Długosz had always been attuned to current and everyday affairs, and that thus he was a keen and exact reader of Latin Humanist writings, and made diligent use of them (many details from them have been discovered in the memorable and touchingly humble “dedicatory” preface to his *Annals*³¹), although of course his attention was focused chiefly on the entire range (ancient, mediaeval, and contemporary) of Western historiography – anything of it he could get his hands on. He had an analogous approach to the vicinal source-materials: German and Teutonic, and, going in the other direction, Ruthenian, Church Slavonic and Russian,³² which he mastered in the manner of an erudite, as profoundly as only the most persevering of the sleuths of history in fifteenth-century Europe did. But at this point all his stylistic links with Humanism come to an abrupt end, since it is not just methodology and the indispensable material resources, but rather the way one sees things and one’s ideological attitude that determine a writer’s position.

In these intrinsically personal matters we no longer entertain any doubts or experience fundamental problems relating to him. The out-

²⁹ J. Długosz, *Opera omnia*, cura et impensis A. Przeździecki edita, vol. XII: *Historiae Polonicae libri [...]*, vol. III, instruxit I.Ż. Pauli (Kraków, 1876), 105 (or in the recent edition: *Annales seu Cronicae...*, liber IX (Warszawa, 1978), 120); cf. W. Preisner, *Dante i jego dzieła w Polsce. Bibliografia krytyczna z historycznym wstępem* (Toruń, 1957), 159 ff.

³⁰ J. Długosz, *Opera omnia...*, vol. XIV, *Historiae Polonicae libri...*, vol. V: Liber XII (Kraków, 1878), 372, 601, and 629–631. See also M. Małowist, *Kaffa – kolonia geneueńska na Krymie i problem wschodni w latach 1453–1475* (Warszawa, 1947), 344–346, with an extensive French summary.

³¹ Apart from the data in *N. Korbut* (1964), vol. II, 130 ff., see T. Sinko, “De Długossii praefatione *Historiae Polonorum*,” in *Studia z dziejów kultury polskiej...*, 105–145; A. Rogalan-ka, “Przedmowa Długosza do *Dziejów Polski*,” *Rocznik Historyczny* XIX (1952): 68–98; Koczarska, *Mentalność Jana Długosza w świetle jego twórczości* (Warszawa, 1971), 109–140; U. Borkowska, “Historiograficzne poglądy Jana Długosza,” *Długossiana, Studia historyczne*, Part II (Kraków, 1985), 45–71; T. Ulewicz, *Historycznoliterackie zaplecze listu dedykacyjnego Długosza do Z. Oleśnickiego*, *ibid.*, 33–43.

³² E. Perfeckij, “*Historia Polonica*” *Jana Długosze a ruské letopisectví* (Praha, 1932) with an extensive French summary.

look on life held by Jan Długosz, the greatest Slavonic historian right up to the mid-nineteenth century (Lelewel's times) – the worldview manifested by this scholar who displayed an impressive degree of responsibility towards his source materials, and pragmatism in their application, especially in the innumerable preliminary and now invaluable studies he carried out before he proceeded to their synthesis – was decidedly and traditionally mediaeval (in the ideological sense),³³ and ecclesiastical and conservative in many ways. Similarly his Latinity was of the traditionally mediaeval kind, although it had a rich vocabulary and was sophisticated and expressive as a piece of literature, but nevertheless composed in a “still mediaeval, somewhat ponderous style, although he set himself Livy as a model for emulation.”³⁴ He followed this Augustan historian quite intentionally: he was the first in Poland to procure a manuscript of Livy, and from the very beginning of his career under the moral direction of Oleśnicki, where there must have been a variety of textual, chiefly Italian, prompts at play,³⁵ he chose Livy as the paragon to heed.

Thus all the more he offers a highly instructive example of a man of a period of transition, a time in which a breakthrough was being made. He could not have been the only such figure in the psychological sense, against such a diversified background of the developmental meanders of Renaissance Humanism in Europe,³⁶ especially Central Europe, of which Poland manifested a particularly representative version, as regards both

³³ Apart from all the other indications, I shall make a special mention of the touching remark in *Vita Dlugossi* by an unknown biographer (Brożek attributed it to Callimachus, and Koczerska probably to Jakub of Szadek), that when he was about to board the ship for his return journey from the Holy Land, Długosz was even more overwhelmed with regret at having to leave than he had been to see it. He had lived in vain until he had seen the land of his Saviour, and now he could say, along with the Psalmist, “Nunc dimittis servum tuum, Domine” (Bobrzyński, Smolka, *Jan Długosz...*, 61). The quoted text is to be found in Latin in the old edition of the works of Długosz, *Opera*, eds. I. Polkowski and Ż. Pauli (Kraków, 1887), p. XII, and in *Vita Ioannis Dlugosch Senioris, canonici Cracoviensis*, ed. M. Brożek (Warszawa, 1961), 50. Cf. Koczerska, “Kto jest autorem *Żywotu Długosza?*,” in *Venerabiles, nobiles et honesti. Studia z dziejów społeczeństwa Polski średniowiecznej* (Toruń, 1997), 507–520.

³⁴ F. Papée, “Długosz Jan,” *PSB* V, 179. For a comprehensive discussion of the contemporary reception of Livy, see Billanovich, *La tradizione del testo di Livio e le origini dell'Umanesimo*, vol. I: *Tradizione e fortuna di Livio tra Medioevo e Umanesimo*, parte 1 (Padova, 1981).

³⁵ Many of his prompts must have been mediaeval, as his detailed catalogues of bishops show; see M. Friedberg, *Kultura polska a niemiecka. Elementy rodzime a wpływy niemieckie w ustroju i kulturze Polski średniowiecznej*, vol. II (Poznań, 1946), 37 (a book that deserves a reprint and a continuation!).

³⁶ As regards the Slavonic territories, see the meticulously supplemented Italian translation of the book by I.N. Golenishchev-Kutuzov, *Il Rinascimento italiano e le letterature slave dei secoli XV e XVI*, ed. S. Graciotti e J. Křesálková, vols. I–II (Milano, 1973).

the intellectual, literary and scholarly links with Italy under discussion here, and with the general cultural atmosphere of the times. Długosz's case becomes all the more interesting if we recall his immediate association with the profound ideological currents in the spirituality of the Polish Church in that century, which not without reason, and often quite emphatically, has been labelled the *felix saeculum Cracoviae* in the Latin church music of the past. This is amply demonstrated not only by the texts of particular extant hymns around which a wealth of tradition has built up. The earliest of these is the anthem about St. Stanislaus, by Wincenty of Kielcza, *Gaude, Mater Polonia, / Gaude, felix Cracovia*; next the 15th-century sequence, again on St. Stanislaus, by Adam Świnka Porcarius with the words *O, felix Cracovia / Cuius late gloria*; and the moving *Planctus Mariae* (otherwise known as *Lament świętokrzyski*, which still requires further comparative study by mediaevalists).³⁷ But the major factor here was the continuous influx of pilgrims into a now rapidly growing Cracow, to the various shrines and sanctuaries, especially on feasts or patron saints' days.³⁸ These special places of worship included the tomb of St. Stanislaus and the grave of Queen Jadwiga, universally beloved by the whole nation, at Wawel;³⁹ but also to Skałka Church (in Pauline hands since 1472), which was so dear to Długosz's heart and which was now turning into a popular venue for devotion; likewise to the grave of St. Jacek in the Dominican Church; and to a multitude of other churches and the relics housed in them, which mediaeval Europe accorded such reverence and attention.

This was a lively environment, in which alongside the veneration of the native and local saints and beatified persons there was also a deep-rooted cult of the Paleo-Christian relics of St. Florian, not to mention the fact that many of the local churches had been endowed with pontifical privileges "to administer the same indulgences as the churches of Rome." Such places were not limited just to the confines of Cracow, but scattered

³⁷ Apart from the observations of S. Sawicki, "Motywy Maryjne w poezji średniowiecza i renesansu," in *Z pogranicza literatury i religii, szkice* (Lublin, 1979); and S. Nieznanowski, "Średniowieczna liryka religijna, rekonesans," in the collective volume *Polska liryka religijna* (Lublin, 1983); see S. Graciotti, "Il *Lament świętokrzyski* e la tradizione medioevale del *Planctus Beatae Mariae Virginis*," *Ricerche Slavistiche XXXVIII* (1971): 105–139, and in an extended Polish version in the collective volume *Od "Lamentu świętokrzyskiego" do "Adona."* *Włoskie studia o literaturze staropolskiej*, eds. G. Brogi-Bercoff and T. Michałowska (Warszawa, 1995), 31–67; J. Mazur, "Felix Cracovia," in idem *Widok z 'królewskiego powozu' publicystyka religijna i społeczna* (Kraków, 2004), 69–74.

³⁸ A. Witkowska, *Kulty pątnicze piętnastowiecznego Krakowa. Z badań nad miejską kulturą religijną* (Lublin, 1984).

³⁹ A modern indication of Queen Jadwiga's continuing position in Polish culture is the naming of a new Jagiellonian University scholarship fund after her.

throughout the diocese. The Sandomierz Collegiate Church of Our Lady, for instance, enjoyed the same privileges as Santa Maria ad Martyres in Rome (*easdem indulgencias, quas habet ecclesia nostra Romana, que sancte Marie ad Martyres nuncupatur*), magnanimously bestowed on it still in 1296 by Boniface VIII, in connection with the murder there in 1260 by the Tartars of the Blessed Abbot Sadok and his confreres.⁴⁰ Another place which had had a similar ecclesiastical privilege conferred on it – now completely forgotten – was the Cracovian Church and Hospital of the Holy Spirit on the Szpitalna Street. In 1461 Pius II officially confirmed these privileges as identical with those of the mother house, *hospitali S. Spiritus in Saxia de Urbe*⁴¹ – just a stone’s throw from St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican. All of this was of course couched in the atmosphere of deep piety marking the age, and manifested in practices like the making of pilgrimages to seven canonically privileged churches or altars (cf. the Wawel inscriptions, *altare unum ex septem privilegiatum*), by analogy to what was done in Rome,⁴² Jerusalem, and Byzantium, or even in the Church of the Holy Cross at Łysa Góra.⁴³ It was a piety, moreover, endorsed by the personal testimony of several of the saintly individuals Długosz was acquainted with or even knew well, who left a permanent mark on the local cultural tradition – who lived, worked and prayed in a busy, Gothic Cracow bustling with crowds of visitors.

There was a host of these individuals well-known in local history for their piety, and all living within more or less the same half-century; naming them now will safeguard us against any potential accusations of making an unsubstantiated claim. One was Master Jan of Kęty (St. John Cantius, died 1473), a venerable professor of the University of Cracow who devoted his hard-working life to the copying of theological and re-

⁴⁰ Fijałek, *Studia do dziejów Uniwersytetu krakowskiego i jego wydziału teologicznego w XV wieku* (Kraków, 1899), 159; for the charter of privileges, see *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski*, ed. F. Piekosiński (Kraków, 1876), 153; also K. Stopka, “Sadok...,” *PSB XXXIV*, 287–289.

⁴¹ A. Theiner, *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia [...] ex tabulis Vaticanis*, vol. II (Romae, 1861), 141–142. On the Hospitallers of the Holy Spirit in Poland, see (following the work of O. De Angelis) K. Antosiewicz, “Zakon Duchy Świętego de Saxia w Polsce średniowiecznej,” *Nasza Przeszłość XXIII* (Kraków, 1966), 167–98, with a bibliography.

⁴² This issue, which has extensive and glorious roots (biblical, especially in the Apocalypse of St. John), is discussed by J. Kalinowska, “Mysterium septiformis Ecclesiae,” *Analecta Cracoviensia XXIII* (1991): 307–324, and in a French version in *Rocznik Muzeum Narodowego w Warszawie XXXVI* (1992), 57–80; cf. R. Mazurkiewicz, *Deesis. Idea wstawienictwa Bogarodzicy i św. Jana Chrzciciela w kulturze średniowiecznej* (Kraków, 1994).

⁴³ The subject received the greatest amount of attention from K. Szajnocha.

ligious manuscripts;⁴⁴ and, as Canon at St. Florian's, to looking after the young and the poor. He is said to have made several expiatory pilgrimages on foot from Cracow to Rome, as acknowledged by Skarga.

The next to be enumerated is the already-mentioned Prince Casimir, who died young in 1484. He was a youth of many outstanding talents, prominent already in the eyes of his contemporaries,⁴⁵ and especially admired by his preceptor Długosz.⁴⁶ Then there was the retinue of the beatified: Izajasz Boner (died 1471), an Augustinian Friar and professor of Cracow University who had also studied at Padua, where he had stayed for a while in a local monastery; an Observantine, Szymon of Lipnica, who preached at Wawel Cathedral and died of the plague in 1482 while attending to the sick in the city; and another ascetic Observantine, Jan of Dukla (died 1484, canonised by John Paul II in 1997), who was later associated with Lwów. Then there was Michał Giedroń, a newcomer from Wilno who lived in St. Mark's Monastery and died there in 1485; and Świętosław Milczący (Silentiosus), his friend and companion of many years' standing, of St. Mary's Church (died 1489); Stanisław Kazimierzczyk (Casimiritanus, died 1489) of the Canons Regular at Corpus Christi Church; and finally the Polish and Latin poet, Władysław of Gielniów (died 1505), who spent his later years in Warsaw. The above-listed persons who led sanctified lives (regardless of whether formally canonised and/or beatified, or not) must certainly have made a lasting impression on the spiritual and cultural affairs of their locality and times.⁴⁷

This group of devout individualities presents a highly instructive background to the ideas that shaped the creative work of Jan Długosz, who – contrary to the half-baked opinions which are sometimes heard about him – could by no means have lived and worked in a Cracow where he was in ideological isolation, supposedly the ultimate witness to times

⁴⁴ An excellent catalogue of these manuscripts is to be found in R.M. Zawadzki, "Stan badań nad życiem i spuścizną rękopiśmienną św. Jana z Kęt," *Analecta Cracov.* V–VI (Kraków, 1975): 7–48; idem, *Spuścizna rękopiśmienna świętego Jan Kantego...* (Kraków, 1995); and *Catalogus codicum... S. Joannis Cantii... qui in Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana asservantur* (Kraków, 1997).

⁴⁵ Alongside the well-known opinion Długosz had of the Prince, there was also a record made by Jan of Targowisko (d. 1492): "Princeps stupendae virtutis et prudentiae et doctrinae eximia, quibus multorum populorum corda in sui amorem attraxerit" (see *Monumenta Poloniae Historica* III, Lwów, 1878, 237), pointed out by B. Przybyszewski, "Spotkanie ze świętym Kazimierzem," *Analecta Cracov.* XVI (Kraków, 1984): 111.

⁴⁶ Cf. the invaluable collection of essays in a jubilee volume (ed. R.M. Zawadzki), *Analecta Cracov.* XVI (Kraków, 1984).

⁴⁷ For the lives and bibliographies of all of these figures, see the encyclopaedic *Hagiografia polska*, ed. R. Gustaw, vols. I–II (Poznań, 1971–1972); *PSB* and *Słownik Polskich Teologów...*; also, *Święci polscy*, ed. K. Bukowski (Kraków, 1986).

that were receding into the past. Długosz was a scholar but also a patriotic clergyman whose world attitude and strong, disciplined character succeeded in keeping him, essentially at least, within the closing, locally very productive, stage of the mediaevalism out of which he had grown intellectually and morally and which was now turning into a thing of the past. It could not have been an easy thing to achieve and persevere in, especially in view of the modern and consciously pragmatic methodology he had adopted for the writing of his history, which in many respects turns out to have been more probing and more responsible in terms of historiographical inquiry than the work of many of the historians who came after him and who benefited from the fruits of his labour, in the Renaissance and the 17th and 18th centuries.