

## On the Political Thinking of the Jagiellonian Day



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The reflection on the political thinking of the Jagiellonian era covers the period of almost two centuries. The Polish reader already knows the excellent studies contained in the volume *Political values of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth* – volumen 3 of the series ‘Culture of the First Polish Republic in dialogue with Europe. Hermeneutics of values.’<sup>1</sup> When the reader found out what happened next, it is worth encouraging him to think over the previously formulated positions, those which – on the one hand – are associated with the speeches of outstanding jurists from the first half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, mainly from the reign of Władysław Jagiełło, and on the other with proposals of Jan Ostroróg, from the second half of the same century, who was aware of the changes occurring in the time when Jagiełło’s son, Kazimierz Jagiellończyk, sat on the throne, and finally from with the extensive and diverse studies drawn up by numerous political thinkers of the next century, already forming under the reign of King Sigismund the Old, or his son, King Zygmunt August, exquisitely described a century ago by Stanisław Tarnowski<sup>2</sup> and recently by Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves<sup>3</sup>. The attempt to briefly present the basic elements

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<sup>1</sup> J. Axer, A. Grzeškowiak-Krwawicz (ed.), *Kultura Pierwszej Rzeczypospolitej w dialogu z Europą. Hermeneutyka wartości*, Vol. 3: *Wartości polityczne Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów. Struktury aksjologiczne i granice cywilizacyjne*, Warszawa 2017.

<sup>2</sup> *Pisarze polityczni XVI wieku*, the latest edition: Kraków 2000 (as the first item in the series of more than one hundred volumes published by the Center of Political Thought in Kraków under the name ‘Library of the Classics of Polish Political Thought’).

<sup>3</sup> D. Pietrzyk-Reeves, *Ład Rzeczypospolitej. Polska myśl polityczna XVI wieku a klasyczna tradycja republikańska*, Kraków 2012.

of political thinking of the authors writing under the Jagiellonian rule is not an easy task and in the light of extensive studies and the extent of their analyzes and in relation to the extraordinary and extensive political creation that existed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including the Crown of the Polish Kingdom and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania remaining in various political and legal relations. Such an attempt requires a selection of threads: The author will limit himself to reflection on the three basic categories for the so-called Western political thought, of which the thought delineated during the reign of the Jagiellons was certainly a part. Research on the transformation of meanings of the categories, important in contemporary reflection, because they complement their search, being embedded in various contexts, is extremely necessary in relation to the political traditions of the multinational and multi-confessional Jagiellonian monarchy; they are needed to capture not only the variability of its fate, but also to change the ways of describing what, after all, has undergone changes under the influence of external political forces and changing, formulated as new or changed political, legal, social and economic ideas.

It is usually said that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the dominant tradition reflects the tradition of republicanism, referring to pre-Christian approaches, to Aristotle especially and also to Cicero, but it is supplemented with themes and solutions characteristic of the Christian approach, associated mainly with the reflection of St. Thomas Aquinas, and to some extent also St. Augustine. The republican tradition is said to influence the understanding of such categories as the state (or rather a monarchy in a juxtaposition with the Republic understood as a form of political existence, and not as a community, which makes the existence of a Polish state which took into account the position of a king not legitimising his power 'from above', i.e. as in the doctrine of the divine authority of the king, absent from the Polish experience, but as a 'man-citizen' (invariably understood not only in relation to 'the state' or rather the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) and finally as the law somehow ordering the freedom of both the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the citizen living in it (with a rather narrow understanding of citizenship, not covering all residents of the territory, but only a group indicated and treated differently in legal settlements). The first of these categories, typical of modernity, but unknown in a similar sense before the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, exposes the 'externality' of postulatively

disinterested and impartial (in some approaches even depersonalized or abstract) instance in relation to the collective of individuals, it is sometimes critically (also today) juxtaposed with the category of 'community', which individuals are to co-create, with which they would somehow identify or 'blend in' with it. (Here there is a need to discuss the relationship of the community thus understood not only to individuals 'blended' in it, but also to society, taking into account numerous intellectual traditions, including Aristotle and the so-called modern counter-modernists, and what is more: there is a need for a debate about the correctness of the approach called methodological individualism). This juxtaposition already shows the importance of reflection on the political thinking of the Jagiellonian era; it seems that its creators were still honouring the kind of thinking that directs the citizen towards the community to which he belongs, and not towards the state as an abstract being, nor even towards the monarch (which can be – and sometimes was – pointed out as something peculiar and dangerous in the future) but towards the Commonwealth. What is more important also today (not only because of migration or refugee problems leading to projects of 'multicultural societies', preserving the liberal-democratic values, but also because of the relationship between human rights and citizens' rights, in any case with a certain or at least a potential tension between the 'humanity' of the individual and perhaps built on it – or on its dignity, its political dimension), the relation of the individual and citizen was also presented as demanding and rooting every individual in the genre, and finding it as an element of political community; community, which will be a peculiarity found in the predecessors by Polish authors of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, who will not approve the results of the search of their sixteenth-century predecessors, which precedes it and determines its individual freedom. Finally, there is a third element, especially one that is still current today, which is related to the relationship of law and freedom (not only because of the classic search of ethics, but also, again because of the creation by modern legislators of various catalogues of rights and freedoms of individuals, and in the last decades also cultural and ethnic groups. In this area it is also necessary to continue the debate on ways of understanding freedom and possible entanglement of the subject's will in the differently understood normative order and the one that exceeds the 'power of the human legislator', and that which is the result of applying this power).

Perhaps it is reasonable to assume that the specific republican elements that were supposed to be characteristic of the political thinking of the Jagiellonian day made them clearly different from absolutist and later liberal approaches of the monarchies located west of Jagiełło's and his successors' domain. Indeed, many Polish authors, especially in the sixteenth century, still referred to the reflection on the normative entanglement of decisions already taken by individual members of the community, at least by those who rule them. Legislation of the rulers was to take into account the order not established by them, but it is associated with the law revealed by the only God, or inherent (natural) law, recognized by the 'natural reason'<sup>4</sup>. The reflection on the normative order ahead of the law laid down in various procedures and by various organs was important for the authors of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries not only for analyses regarding legal relations (understood both as a subject, as a set of norms and subjectively as the potential / potency due to subjects of the law as well as the resulting laws: based on the will of a specific subject, perhaps based on time?) and freedom (sometimes also recognized as a state in which the will of the moral agent chooses to act in accordance with the requirements of such order); it is also important for analyses concerning the community (what normative foundation is it build on?) and man (are there any criteria or measures of his humanity, the nature of his 'species?'). Essentially, it seems that the 'classic' approach was dominant: the reflection focused on the 'higher' and 'lower' normative plan, concerned norms rather than rules or potency, what binds all individuals (also the legislator, not only the king, but also possibly members of the collective legislative body) rather than what justifies the separateness and the different actions of the entitled individuals. It also seems that this 'higher' law understood objectively was associated – as in St. Thomas – with the real and knowable power of the innate human reason of nature, based on the understanding of which it was possible to conclude the norms of natural law; norms that had to be taken into account to establish a fair law (the mere observance of the procedure of establishing legal norms was not a sufficient condition for recognizing them as binding).

Dorota Pietrzyk-Reeves rightly points out that it is not the concept

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<sup>4</sup> Evidence for this can be found in the writings of Catholic authors (such as Stanisław Orzechowski), and in the writings of authors who adopted Calvinism or other reformed denominations (such as Andrzej Wolan).

of 'state' but the notion of 'Rzeczpospolita' (*res publica*) that was *the most important category of Polish political theory that took shape in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and with various modifications survived until the time of the partitions*; she is rightly saying that this category defined *the image of the state as a political community – a republic, requiring the introduction and maintenance of not only certain institutions, but above all a certain ethos manifesting itself in the interest of citizens for the public good*; she rightly adds, finally, that the term 'state', which was supposed to become more popular *in western Europe with a particular connotation*, was accepted in Poland, but it was associated with something different, because *the term 'Rzeczpospolita' was best reflected by a notion dominating from the sixteenth century onwards that the Polish state is a public thing, something that is shared and what must be collectively cared for*. Thus, the point was not *the republican (in a later sense) form of government referring to the non-monarchical regime, but a mixed monarchy in which the king and some other authorities were to rule together*.<sup>5</sup> Marcin Kromer could then propose a term for this solution – *regnum et res publica*, which distinguished it from the royal rule devoid of the component of the Commonwealth (was it in reference to the fourteenth-century category introduced by John Fortescue *dominium regnum et politicum?*). It is worth noting that the authors of the Jagiellonian era associated the concept *regnum* not with the state, but with the monarch, slowly abandoning it for the category of *res publica*, requiring not only to find the king's position inside it, but also to recognize the dominant position of the political whole (which translated into looking for justifications for the monarch's cooperation with bodies / organs representing a group not created by the king but existing and possibly caring for their behavior as such, perhaps resulting from the existence of the 'inherent nature' of community life found in every human individual as a representative of the species). If we take these remarks into account, we can see again that an individual was described as being in relation to the species, and thus to God, and as such was bound by norms predicated by innate reason (by which it could not oppose its own pretences

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<sup>5</sup> See: D. Pietrzyk-Reeves, *Ład Rzeczypospolitej...*, *passim*. See: also reflections on two republican traditions: Greek and Roman, of which the first, *Platonic-Aristotelian*, was supposed to dominate the views adopted by Polish authors of the Jagiellonian era.

associated with individual powers recognized by law), and as the one who remains in the Republic, being its component, which should report its particular behavior to it, strengthen its 'free existence' even at the expense of its own 'interest' (the problem of 'citizenship'). In this way in the sixteenth century (although clear traces in this respect also lead to the fifteenth century) it was attempted to solve the problem of potential arbitrariness of the legislator and the mistaken use of freedom by the individual. The 'double binding' of the will of every participant in the legislative body and every citizen by referring them to natural law (and sometimes also to God's law) and to the political community as an existing whole played a key role here. This role was also important even in speculations left by Paweł Włodkowic in the first half of the fifteenth century, who, after all, mentioned the law of God, and the natural law, and the law of nations, the three 'types of rights' derived from three different traditions – of Jerusalem, Athens and Rome, which were used in Christian reflection even when in the West was dominated by the approach called hierocratic, clashing with the first absolutist attempts, referring not to the emperor, but to the so-called national monarchs<sup>6</sup>.

A similar approach can be easily seen also by a much later author, blamed sometimes for the 'confessionalisation of the language' of the Polish debate after the Council of Trent, one of the main fencers of the victorious native Counter-Reformation, namely Piotr Skarga. He also emphasized (after the departure of the rulers from the Jagiellonian dynasty) that the normative order may be learned by man by himself, as he is able to

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<sup>6</sup> Already in the text entitled *Saevientibus* from 1415, Włodkowic argued, sharing the opinion of Pope Innocent IV that *property, power and possessions (rerum dominia iurisdictiones et possessiones) can rightfully and without sin belong to non-believers*. The Pope (whose works he recommended) was supposed to prove that *in fact, the earth and everything that is on it is God's (...), but God Himself has subjected everything to a rational being for whom he created everything (...)*. Hence, *it was at first common to all, until it became the practice of the first couple, that some people should have and take some (things); this is because it is natural that common things are neglected and the community gives rise to discord* (recalling the Decree of Gratian). *And that is why, according to the law of nations, states and separate kingdoms were distinguished* (in: L. Ehrlich (ed.), *Pisma wybrane Pawła Włodkowica*, Vol. I, Warszawa 1968, pp. 6–12). See: B. Szlachta, 'O Saevientibus Pawła Włodkowica uwag kilka', in: J.W. Adamowski, T. Wallas, K. Kakareko (ed.), *Między Klio a Themis. Księga dedykowana Profesorowi Jackowi Sobczakowi*, Warszawa–Poznań 2016, pp. 875–886.

see that *governments and affairs of kingdoms and states exist with God's providence and help, using his natural reason.*<sup>7</sup> This 'natural reason' not only decides that 'God's providence and help' creates both governments and affairs of kingdoms and states (everyone should see 'for themselves' the proper foundation of governments, and the affairs of each political entity probably regardless of the form of government adopted in it), but also influences (or should influence) the content of legislation (though, let us emphasize, 'wisdom of God' may be recognized mainly by priests, who are more – as it turns out – 'epistemically capable' than laymen<sup>8</sup>)<sup>9</sup>. As already mentioned, almost all thinkers of the Jagiellonian era justified the existence of a normative order which – as 'higher law' – was to be known by 'innate

<sup>7</sup> Piotr Skarga, *Kazania sejmowe*, J. Tazbir (ed.), Warszawa 2003, p. 4.

<sup>8</sup> Skarga wrote: *For repairing of things thus contaminated* resulting from the disruption of unity, the weakening of power, the abandonment of discipline and the adherence to liberty as playfulness, *one needs great wisdom. Not just the innate wisdom* (but, let us note), *that which people acquire with joking, good upbringing, reading, especially of stories and other teachings on the Commonwealth, advice, company of wise men, practice and touching and experiencing things themselves, their years and old age. But also you need to reach for the wisdom to heaven* (*Kazania sejmowe*, pp. 14–15). *Senators, what you need is wisdom from heaven. Because human wisdom might get lost and will not see or prevent everything* (ibid., p. 16).

<sup>9</sup> Let us note that Skarga's writings include elements of so-called the dualistic (gelazian) doctrine and its papalist variant, and also a hierocratic approach – once used by Włodkowiec. Elements of all three positions can be recognized also in the writings of other Catholic polemicists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and thus the problem of so-called erastianism with which Catholics struggled may be grasped. Skarga, however, seems to refer mainly to the dualist tradition, treating 'temporal affairs', the affairs of 'Crown and Republic' as relatively different from those 'eternal', 'holy' or 'spiritual' matters, yet without a radical break of ties connecting both types of issues or both 'dimensions', without tearing apart man, who is a being that transcends a 'political plane' (towards the 'metaphysical dimension') and in a plane where he is embedded – a non-bodily or extra-bodily (spiritual) and carnal entity at the same time. The tradition which was close to him assumed that 'universal spiritual moment,' having a normative value, is carried out by the Church, which, (while exercising the authority of the type of *fauctoritas*) is to testify to the identity of all its members in the spiritual plane, transferred to the order of the 'earthly state' through the guardians of secular power, those who did not establish legal norms arbitrarily nor did fall into the tyrannical power, because they were aware of the content of the rules which were also binding to them. The church proposed and presented a normative draft, but was not able to force it to implement it, but the ruling authorities were to apply coercion, possessing the authority of the *potestas* type (See: more in: B. Szlachta, 'Piotr Skarga SJ (1536–1612)', *Teologia Polityczna*, Vol. 9 (2016–2017), pp. 65–79).

reason? It was to serve as a reference point for legislative activity undertaken by relatively numerous citizens, and not only by the king. Thus, the issue of confessional entanglement of the legislation, its instrumentalization against the pretensions of, for example, Roman Catholics, was moved to a somewhat further plane, for the sake of normatively merging of an over-denominational political whole. The problem of the existence of the Commonwealth as the 'object of love' of the citizen appeared especially in the statements of Skarga, who saw love as the main unifying factor indicated by the 'wisdom of God' by 'Lord Jesus, God and our Lord'; mutual love of people, 'peace between them and the holy consent', are the unifying moments that should be taken into account by all the rulers who had to 'light up' with *such a love for people or the Commonwealth*<sup>10</sup> especially (though not only) when fathers and guardians discuss issues of common good for the subjects. It's none other than *God raised them to high offices* but he did not do it for them not alone *or for their benefit, but for the people whom God has entrusted with justice and peace, which they got from God.*<sup>11</sup>

It turns out that Skarga found the provenance of 'justice and peace' in God himself, however, taking into account some elements of the dualistic (gelazian) doctrine he saw secular rulers rather than priests to be in charge of dealing with the common good, to be 'minds and heads' of the subjects; the Church was not to indicate the content of 'common good', but them; the hierarchs of the Church were to lecture on the content of the 'wisdom of God', which should be taken into account by laity in determining the content of the 'common good'. This content came to them as if from the outside, from the side of priests, it was not determined by them because of their lack of appropriate 'epistemic capacity', unjustifiably attributed to themselves by some of the secular superiors ruling in 'Protestant political entities' (also mentioned by Tarnowski<sup>12</sup>, noticing that Catholic rulers

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<sup>10</sup> Piotr Skarga, *Kazania sejmowe*, p. 32.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34.

<sup>12</sup> Tarnowski argued in connection with Skarga's *Sejm sermons* that *one cannot imagine in today's world [which was late nineteenth century!] a preacher who would accuse some parliamentary majority of misconduct pointing that it adopts laws against morality or those harmful to the state, that it is wrong in its unjust treatment of a minority, who would accuse government that it uses impure means to secure a victory, falsifies the electoral lists etc. It would be considered something strange, it would be said that there are necessities that can*

sometimes also performed this 'attribution'<sup>13</sup>). The Pope and other Church hierarchs were not to determine the content of the 'common good', in particular the content of legal norms; this was to be done by lay people, whose responsibility in this regard was great, although they did not work for the Church (not as participants of the political community), for the 'Crown and the Republic' (it is a meaningful contrast, referring us to the previously mentioned Kromer) known by Jesuits as 'mother Church'.

Placing by many authors of the Jagiellonian era, not only Orzechowski or Rotundus, the analyses of individual freedom in the context of the 'proper measure' associated not only with normative measures, but also with the immortal soul and God, to whom this soul is heading, leads to reflection and the entanglement of choices carried out by the will of the moral subject in relation to human law, and – again – over the law of the 'higher order' and over the relation of man-made law to it. It seems that Orzechowski, Skarga, and many others (even the already mentioned Wolan, and also – in reference to the leaders of the Teutonic Order – much earlier Włodkovic and his contemporaries) entangled the human will into a normative context, seeing the freedom of the subject using the will as achieved or fulfilled when he chooses what the standard requires (this applies to the choices made by the king's 'legislative will' as well as the choices of each other subject)<sup>14</sup>. It also seems that the thinkers

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*not be avoided, that every government has the right to defend its rule and that the preacher mingles into affairs that are beyond him (Pisarze polityczni XVI wieku, p. 348).*

<sup>13</sup> One can also ask whether Skarga's reflections do not ask a question present also today in the reflection on the so-called democratic or liberal democratic societies, about the epistemic ability to recognize the content or conditions of God who are to give 'justice and peace' through the so-called electorate; apparently, its members now have influence (at least postulatively) on political decisions, and not just their representatives. In the conviction of Skarga, reason is absent in 'common people' who care for their particular interests (See: *Kazania sejmowe*, especially pp. 134–138).

<sup>14</sup> Presenting in the sixth Sejm sermon four types of freedom, Skarga recognizes, for example, on the one hand 'holy freedom' as good (*Do not serve sins and devil, and avoid the tyranny of hell*), on the other, independence from foreign lords and pagan kings (not being subject to them *but to ours or those chosen by us*), and finally the 'golden freedom' of the third (*not to have a tyrant, or not to serve such a king that he would have us, as he wished, regardless of the law, judged, killed, and possess our goods, daughters and wives, and do what he pleases, regardless of God and righteousness*). Fourth freedom or the fourth kind of freedom is called 'freedom of hell' or 'devil's freedom' and means *living without law, without office, do not care for authority, do not give way to the wise and elderly, have*

of this period considered living in community as a natural, and therefore an effective and fair way to achieve moral goals, indicated by law, but directed not at what is temporal but at the afterlife; the implementation of moral goals required, therefore, free acceptance of the normative order, postulatively reflected in human law defining the rules of behavior in the community (the Commonwealth) and the free will of the free person (also participating in creating the norms), freedom of the possessor, remaining in the state of freedom or practicing freedom.

We know that the sixteenth century was dominated the disputes

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*freedom to sin, to kill and take away* (all quotes from *Kazania sejmowe*, pp. 126–128. See: also p. 144 and next (considerations about the relation of rights and freedoms). The first three freedoms or types of freedom explicitly report the will of the subjects towards the normative order that human law precedes, or even to such a law. Such liberties or such kinds of freedom are achieved only when the will of the subject chooses not what is sinful or contrary to the law (see, in particular, the eighth sermon), but what indicates order; if this is the will of the ruler, he is already conformed to the norm, sometimes a legal norm (this issue is important for everyone who reflects like Skarga, for example, B. Szlachta, ‘O problematyczności uchwał ludu jako źródeł prawa (na przykładzie ‘Polityki’ Arystotelesa), in: M. Marczevska-Rytko, S. Stępień (ed.), *Polska-Europa-świat. Prace politologiczne i historyczne. Księga jubileuszowa ofiarowana Profesorowi Edwardowi Olszewskiemu z okazji 70. rocznicy urodzin*, Lublin 2012, p. 35–47, oraz idem, ‘Prawo a pożytek jako dwa węzły spajające wspólnotę u Cycerona (uwagi wprowadzające), in: Z. Władek et al. (ed.), *Księga życia i twórczości. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana Profesorowi Romanowi A. Tokarczykowi, V: Prawo*, Lublin 2013, pp. 351–360). On the other hand, if the will of the subject chooses an act contrary to the requirements of order, sometimes (postulatively always) with the requirements of law, then none of the first three freedoms can be realized, because the choice opposing order is a sign of the implementation of the fourth, ‘hellish’ or ‘devilish’ freedom, the wrong one, identical with ‘playfulness’. Skarga writes: *You are only tyrants to yourself, when you do not exercise your rights, but with false freedom and wantonness create obstacles for yourselves* (*Kazania sejmowe*, p. 37): While the members of the ‘mother’, ‘Crown and Republic’ are not enslaved by the ‘God-fearing’ after all, ‘masters and kings’, they themselves become tyrants when their freedom is wrong, when it is not just, but is rather against justice inscribed in the order of God and taught by priests. Also in this respect one can speculate on how much it is advisable to separate the will (even the wrong one) and the freedom of a given entity, but it is worth realizing that Skarga advises *You hurt yourselves and raise one over the other with tyranny, not executing laws, and limiting God’s power wherever you need it* (ibid). Despite these possible speculations, it is worth noting that it implies an unusual (but is it legitimate and well-founded?) faith in the saturation of law with content that should be chosen by will to confirm the freedom of a particular moral subject who is a member of the political community.

initiated in the Renaissance, strengthened and certainly enriched during the Reformation; that apart from crystallizing, based on different reasons and coming from various premises, the doctrines of the monarch's absolutism, not only new concepts of state and law were established in this period, but also new approaches to politics; that the discussions caused by Republican Venetian and Florentine thinkers of the first half of the sixteenth century, Sarpi and Machiavelli, Giannotti and Contarini, and the decline of irethnic tendencies in France of the last quarter of this century led to the establishment of tendencies emphasising the position of the political ruler as the only keystone of the political community on the other hand, tendencies emphasizing the sovereign character of the community as a whole or its representatives as the source of power of those who personified the whole of the community; we know, and probably (at least according to Tarnowski) they were also known by Polish thinkers of the sixteenth century, arrangements made by French 'politicians' and supporters of Jean Bodin's position based on the premises found in Roman law, indicating the need to submit the full authority in one organ, whose order it is a source of law and the theses of radical 'monarchomachs', both from the Protestant and Catholic camps, which exaggerate usefulness for the community or its representatives as a criterion for the lasting of the ruler, and hence undermine the hereditary title of monarchs. We also know that critics of new approaches, freeing political reflection from the relation to the universal religious and ethical foundations of the Pope and a community of faith and doctrine rooted in the teaching of Christ, which expose the qualitative differences of political and religious-ethical aims, the separateness of the public and private spheres, even the independence of law as a 'command of the sovereign' from conditions reaching those normative domains, was accompanied by opposition of many political thinkers referring to late medieval Christian reflection, exposing the conditions of the existence of the universal Christian community, the limits of established law and the model of the political ruler, contributing to the duration of this community and beyond the limits of the freedom to decide about the content of the law. Disputes dividing the irenists and supporters of the national churches, conciliarists and papalists, opposing the attempts to question the unity of the Church, polemics between erastianists, subordinating the Church to the state, followers of the gelazian

dualistic doctrine, defending the autonomy of the Church towards political rulers, and ultramontic hierocrats, advocating papal authority also in the political plane did not only divide Western thinkers, but also made an impression on discussions of Polish authors. Nevertheless, the style of political thinking in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, almost two centuries of Jagiellonian rule in a vast monarchy located between East and West, was dominated by approaches exposing the moment of entanglement of the legislator (as well as every individual) into a 'higher normative order' (which was still used as a 'legal' value), and the moment of linking the citizen with the political whole to which he belongs, and the moment of community which was slowly washed away not so much from reflection (until the 18<sup>th</sup> century), but from the current political activity, and perhaps even from 'political practice'. Three of these moments, which are often displaced by other moments, more 'legal-positive', 'legitimate' and 'individualistic', still require reflection; maybe more than the usually raised problem of the 'Jagiellonian idea' as justification for attempts to strengthen the position of the Polish State towards its ever stronger neighbours should be remembered from the presentations of contemporary authors contemporary to the Polish rulers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries?



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