Poland, pp. 389-413) says that only in large cities with a large number of monastic churches could the population choose the church in which it wanted to hear mass. Tadeusz M. Trajdos describes *The Marian Cull in Mendicant Churches of Medieval Lwów*, its forms and the privileges connected with it (indulgences) as well as the altars and statues founded by burghers, monarchs and noblemen (pp. 415-432). As Jerzy Kaliszuk says (*The Cult of the Magi in the Towns of the Polish Kingdom in the 15th Century*, pp. 433-438), this cult was particularly strong among burghers but it could also be noticed in other social groups. Anna Pobóg-Lenartowicz (*The Cult of Saints in Silesian Monasteries of Canons Regular in the Middle Ages*, pp. 439-452) emphasises that in the mid-15th century the cult of saints became similar in all monasteries. Maria Starnawska's article (*The Distribution and Structure of Relics in Polish Medieval Towns. Research Issues*, pp. 453-462) contains remarks on places where relics were kept and on the importance of some of these relics. Ryszard Skrzyniarz discusses *The Medieval Sermons of Canons Regular in Poland*, emphasising their importance in the teaching of the faithful (pp. 463-472). Jarosław Wenta (*The Sermon and the Historical Example in Late Medieval Chełmno*, pp. 473-482) points out that Peter Dusburg's chronicle was used as a preacher's compendium in the 1430s. According to the author, this means that the subjects of the Teutonic Knights' state identified themselves with the Order. Krzysztof Bracha (*The Miracle of the Host and Anti-Jewish Excesses. The Example Cited in the Sermon 'De corpore Christi' from the Collection of Piotr from Miłosław, 15th c.*, pp. 483-491) connects the anti-Jewish excesses with changes in Catholic religiousness. Paweł Kras (*Heretic Groups in Late Medieval Towns (Waldensians in Bohemia. Hussites in Poland)*, pp. 495-514) points out that the two groups used similar forms, such as secret activity, fixed places of meetings, masters, system of mutual aid. Only one article is dedicated to the Jewish community, even though Jews constituted a large part of the urban population in the region and period discussed by the authors. Hanna Zaremska (*Contacts between Early Medieval Jewish Communities in Central Europe and Rabbis of Western Ashkenazic Diaspora*, pp. 515-526) says that these contacts came to an end during the crusades and the pogroms of Jews at the end of the 11th and in the 12th century; they were restored after the inflow of from German countries to Central Europe.

To sum up, this is an interesting review of research on the piety of urban population and the functioning of Church institutions in towns. It is worth pointing out that the majority of the authors whose texts have been included in the volume are young or middle-aged historians, which augurs well for future research.


There is a voluminous literature on Gutenberg, however, what circulates in popular use is frequently repeated information of secondary value. On the other hand, research into the beginnings of printing continues in many countries and seems to augur well, which is testified by the bibliography included in the work under discussion.

The fact that the topic has been taken up by Jan Pirożyński guarantees that his new book (based on solid documentation and at the same time easy to read) will find its permanent place in the historiography. The author, who made his début with a monograph of one of the Seyms of the second half of the 16th century, years ago started research on the European culture of the Golden Age and became an excellent expert on archival materials and the beginnings of the press in Europe, above all due to his thorough inquiries conducted in the Herzog
In 1995 he published the work *Z dziejów obiegu informacji w Europie XVI wieku. "Nowiny z Polski" w kolekcji Jana Jakuba Wicka w Zurychu z lat 1560-1587* (From the History of the Circulation of Information in 16th Century Europe. "News from Poland" in the Collection of Johann Jacob Wick of Zurich in the Years 1560-1587), and in the year 2000 two subsequent volumes from the fundamental series *Drukarze dawnej Polski od XV do XVIII wieku* (The Printers of Old Poland from the 15th till the 18th Century) appeared in print in his edition.

In his introduction the author draws attention to the enormous bibliography (the first studies go back to 1640) on the subject and at the same time to numerous secrets concerning the father of printing ("very famous, but at the same time, paradoxically, he remains virtually unknown, and we have to say, alas, that we still do not know much about him..."). Jan Pirożyński's book is the first competent view, in recent Polish writings, of the beginnings of printing in Europe. It also takes into consideration the development of book production techniques from antiquity till the 16th century, and emphasizes the significance of the revolution in this field for intellectual life (humanism, the Reformation). The author sets himself (with a question mark) the task of reaching not only professionals in his field, but also the normal reader; on reading the book we see that this design has been fulfilled, due to the author’s excellent research apparatus and his good experience as a writer of didactic works.

The first of the 14 chapters is addressed primarily to the reader with a general education, although a specialist will also benefit from this synthetic treatment of the *Długi i dawny rodowód druku* (The Long and Old Genealogy of Printing) — since the exposition starts with the upper Paleolithic period when (about 15 thousand years B.C.) in the caves of what is now contemporary France the prints of human palms were fixed with the help of special techniques; the next stage was Turkey (over six thousand years B.C.), Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Athens. Of similar character is chapter II, concerning *Kultura książki późnego średniowiecza w Europie i bezpośrednie źródła inspiracji Gutenberga* (The Book Culture in Late Medieval Times in Europe and the Direct Sources of Gutenberg’s Inspiration); (it should be noted, however, that among the recent Polish publications these questions have also been raised by Edward Potkowski’s monograph as well as a number of articles by that author, one of them mentioned in the extensive but selective bibliography).

Chapters 3–10 deal with the successive stages in the printer’s life and work — that is his family background, his stay in Strasbourg and Mainz, his trial and the decline of his life, as well as his memorable invention (the technical aspects of his idea to use a movable type) and his most famous publication — *The Bible*. Chapter 10 is devoted to his posthumous fame which — as often happens — was to be a recompense for enormous difficulties he encountered in his lifetime; some space is also devoted to other competitors who aspired to that fame and claimed the credit for inventing similar types, supported in their claims by other, not only German, centres greedy of fame. The author notes that successes have many fathers and in this case — although “numerous, absolutely fantastic ideas and legends” did circulate, not all the competitive versions should be completely rejected, for Gutenberg did not act in a vacuum and was not the only inventor who wanted to meet the need for the mass production of books. Therefore we should not accept his over-idealistic portrait cherished in Germany, especially over the last two centuries.

Chapters 11–14 make up a separate part of the book and deal with the significance of the invention of printing to the technology and culture of early modern times. They are based on the author’s solid analysis and refer to his earlier studies. They tell of the improvements on the invention of the Master of Mainz, the 16th century publications, their importance to the process of intellectual transformations of that era, and lastly the impact of this great invention on the beginnings of the long evolution of mass media, which is still under way. This
chapter should be especially recommended to modern media experts, who sometimes think too much of the future, and have not enough respect for the achievements of the early ages.

Jan Pirożyński's synthesis closes with appendices about the sources, the above-mentioned selective bibliography and indexes — of persons and places.

Bogumiła Kosmanowa


The Ashgate company which publishes Variorum Collected Studies Series, that is, volumes of studies by various historians on the history of East and Central Europe, has now brought out a volume of Maria Bogucka's studies. The form and contents of the book are the result of many kinds of restrictions. Since the volume could not contain more than twenty essays, it was necessary to make a scrupulous and rigorous selection from the hundreds of essays written by Bogucka. The selection had to be in keeping with the subject indicated by the title of the volume. Six essays concern the history of Baltic commerce in the first half of the 17th century, in particular the participation of the inhabitants of Gdańsk and Dutchmen, nine studies present Central European, especially Polish, towns in the early modern era, and only four deal with other questions, mainly with the customs of Polish nobility. The most drastic restriction was that the publishing house decided to publish only those essays which have already appeared in languages other than Polish (mainly English, but also French and German). This has automatically excluded the countless articles which Bogucka has published only in Polish. All this has made it impossible to present her scholarly output in full. Biographic studies, e.g. the lives of women-rulers or rulers' wives (Bona Sforza, Anna Jagiellon, Catherine Habsburg, Elżbieta Granowska, Barbara Radziwiłł, Mary Stuart), one of Bogucka's favourite subjects, as well as studies dealing with the history of women (only one essay of this kind has been included in the volume) had to be abandoned. The company's rules have also restricted the presentation of Bogucka's studies on the history of old Polish customs (only three studies raising this subject are in the volume), a field in which Bogucka has substantial achievements, especially in showing the role of customs as a set of norms which, together with the laws, regulated various fields of social life. It is a pity that in addition to Work. Time Perception and Leisure in an Agricultural Society: The Case of Poland in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries the volume does not include the article Space and Time as Factors Shaping Polish Mentality from the 16th until the 17th Century ("Acta Poloniae Historica" 1992). This article may be off the subject indicated by the title but the study Between Capital. Residential Town and Metropolis. The Development of Warsaw in the Sixteenth-Eighteenth Centuries (Capital Cities and Their Hinterland in Early Modern Europe, Aldershot 1996) falls within the established area as regards its subject and language and would have been an excellent supplement to the article Krakau—Warschau—Danzig. Funktionen und Wandel von Metropolen 1450-1650, which is included in the volume. It would have documented Bogucka's interest in the history of Warsaw.

It is most regrettable that apart from a few studies on burghers' culture, the volume does not include Bogucka's excellent essay L'attrait de la culture nobiliaire? Sarmatisation de la bourgeoisie polonaise au XVIIe siècle ("Acta Poloniae Historica", 1976) which presents the Sarmatisation of Polish burghers, that is, the adoption of patterns of the nobility's culture by Polish townspeople in the 17th century.