
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. 1. 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.

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This is an extremely important question, a question which has been given different interpretations by historians. Can one speak of bourgeois culture in pre-partition Poland or was the whole of old Polish culture a culture of the nobility? What is striking is, on the one hand, the fact that old Polish culture had all the marks of the nobility's culture, that it was dominated by the tastes and predilections of the nobility and the magnates, that as regards customs, aesthetics and mentality, the nobility's patterns were adopted also by burghers. On the other hand, one should not forget that this culture was created mainly, and in some fields (architecture, sculpture, painting, science) exclusively, by burghers, and that rich townsfolk were important art patrons. Let us also remember that in the 16th–18th centuries there were always more literate persons among the townspeople than among noblemen (Bogucka writes about this, referring to the research of her predecessors), and this was of fundamental importance for the creation and popularisation of culture.

As the Ashgate publishing company mechanically reprinted the previously published essays, Bogucka had no opportunity to make any changes, improvements or additions. Some of the studies included in the volume appeared as early as the 1970s, only a half of them were printed after 1990. Many books and articles dealing with the subjects discussed by Bogucka have been brought out since that time. The author was unable to take into account even her own later conclusions, e.g. those presented in the book co-authored by Henryk Samsonowicz, _The History of Towns and Townspeople in Pre-Partition Poland_, which was published in 1988. Books of such great importance for the history of European urbanisation as those by Jan de Vries, Paul Bairoch, Paul M. Hohenberg and Lynn Hollen Lees, as well as Ryszard Szczygiel's monograph on the urbanisation of Poland in the 16th century appeared in the 1980s and later, to say nothing of the studies concerning the urbanisation of various regions of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (Felix Kiry, Jerzy Motylewicz), V. V. Dorosenko's monograph on Riga's trade in the 17th century, published in 1985, deepens and expands what Bogucka wrote 12 years earlier in her article _Amsterdam and the Baltic in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century_ (first item in the volume). In some of the studies presenting the history of burghers' culture the author could not consider important essays on the presence of noblemen in towns or townsfolk's sepulchral monuments and epitaphs for these were published later. In the article on social care and hospitals in Gdańsk in the 14th–17th centuries, which was published in 1997 (item XVII...
in the volume under review), Bogucka could not refer to *Charitas. Charity and Social Care in the Ideology, Norms of Behaviour and Practice of Religious Communities in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 16th–18th Centuries* for it was published two years later. Nor could she take into account Andrzej Karpiński’s book *The Struggle against an Invisible Enemy. Epidemics of Contagious Diseases in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 15th–18th Centuries and Their Demographic, Socio-Economic and Political Consequences* for it was brought out soon after her article. It is most regrettable that the publishing house did not give the author the chance to modernise her texts so that they should reflect the present state of research, including her own research.

The volume of Maria Bogucka’s studies published by the Ashgate company will be used mainly by non-Polish historians. Polish researchers will use Polish editions of her studies for they have access to all her works (the bibliography of Maria Bogucka’s works, compiled by Andrzej Karpiński and Edward Opałinski and included in the book *People. Contacts. Culture 16th–18th Centuries* (Warszawa 1997. pp. 7–58), will make the choice easier. However, would it not be worth while to publish a Polish collection of Bogucka’s most important studies?”

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