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The Anatomy of the Armorial

Although the Old Polish masters of heraldry were undoubtedly familiar with the word “herbarz” [armorial], they did not use it in the titles of their works. It was used, however, by Marcin of Urzędów in the acclaimed *Herbarz polski to jest o przyrodzeniu ziół i drzew rozmaitych* (Kraków, 1595). In the sixteenth, and the seventeenth century as well, “herbarz” denoted “a book about plants, a herbal, *herbarius liber*.”¹ It may be thus worth keeping in mind that, at some point in time, Old Polish armorials were not known as “herbarze.”² The term began to denote armorials only in the nineteenth century, as evidenced by Kasper Niesiecki’s *Korona polska*, the second edition of which, from the years 1839–1846 (published by Jan Nepomucen Bobrowicz), shared its title with the treatise by the sixteenth-century botanist, appearing in print as *Herbarz polski*.

The current generic category of the armorial has its roots in nineteenth-century tradition. In the conclusion of her interesting article, Magdalena Piskała states that the category should be understood broadly when applied to Old Polish writing.³ Perhaps even very broadly, as it encompasses works rather diverse formally. To paraphrase the German scholar Karlheinz Stierle, one could propose that the shape of the work is defined by its function.⁴ Books referred to today as Old Polish armorials have once served manifold purposes, which was a source of the differences between them.

At first glance, a heraldic manuscript by the Jesuit Jan Kołozwarski⁵ may seem to be a rather unoriginal armorial, marked by the “practice of

¹ M.R. Mayenowa and F. Peplowski (eds), *Słownik polszczyzny XVI wieku* (Wrocław, 1974), vol. 8, p. 324.

² The word “herbarz” [denoting an armorial] is used for the first time on the title page of Stanisław Duńczewski’s *Herbarz wielu domów Korony Polskiej i W. Ks. Litewskiego* (Kraków: Drukarnia B. Jana Kantego, 1757), vol. 1–2.

³ M. Piskała, “Herbarz (staropolski) jako gatunek literacki,” *Teksty Drugie*, 1 (2015), p. 355.

⁴ K. Stierle, “Historia jako exemplum – exemplum jako historia. O pragmatyce i poetyce tekstów narracyjnych,” transl. M. Łukasiewicz, *Pamiętnik Literacki*, 69 (1978), p. 337.

⁵ The manuscript of The Raczyński Library in Poznań from 1647 (No. 315, II. K.c. 43).

uncritical copying from the already published works.”⁶ But such postulates simply must be rejected when we learn that the author was a professor of rhetoric, and the armorial itself—a school code meant to support the teaching of oratory.⁷

I have elsewhere attributed a similar function to Szymon Okolski’s monumental armorial, *Orbis Polonus*,⁸ a proposal questioned recently by Jakub Z. Lichański.⁹ However, Barbara Milewska-Ważbińska believes that as a book constituting a compendium of knowledge, and at the same time a collection of models for the use of heraldic symbolism in oration, it may indeed have been used “as a special textbook of rhetoric.”¹⁰ If this is not the case, then what is the actual function of *Orbis Polonus*? Lichański does not provide an answer to this question.

The word “herbarz” was used also in reference to the heraldic appendix included by Mateusz Ignacy Kuligowski in his *Demokryt śmieszny* (1699). The appendix includes a collection of poems discussing the most important Polish armorial bearings:

Wszystkich nie piszę herbów, które wyrażone
Są w kronikach autorów, tylko położone
Te są: które mogą być młodzi ekscytarzem
Do męstwa i cnót. Bom tu nie jest kronikarzem
Ani po stronach szukam herbów nie wpisanych
Do ksiąg, których jest dotąd wiele zaniedbanych.¹¹

These verses are an important signal of generic awareness in the Old Polish heraldic literature, showing clearly that armorials were at that time indeed treated as chronicles.¹² Not all of them, naturally, only some. Compiling a book based on the already available publications was easy. It was

⁶ Z. Pentek, “XVII-wieczny herbarz rękopiśmienny ze zbiorów Biblioteki Raczyńskich w Poznaniu,” *Gens* (1993), p. 121.

⁷ M. Kazańczuk, “Co może łączyć herbarz ze zbiorem nowel? O funkcji retorycznej kodeksów rękopiśmiennych Jana Kołozwarskiego i Michała Jurkowskiego,” in Ł. Cybulski and K. Koehler (eds), *Retoryka Towarzystwa Jezusowego i jej konteksty* (Warszawa, 2014), pp. 69–67.

⁸ M. Kazańczuk, *Staropolskie legendy herbowe* (Wrocław, 1990), p. 34; M. Kazańczuk, “Staropolskie herbarze. Herby—historia—religia,” *Pamiętnik Literacki*, 93/3 (2002), p. 41.

⁹ J.Z. Lichański, “Szymon Okolski – retoryka, historia, retoryka,” *Rocznik Polskiego Towarzystwa Heraldycznego*, 13 (2014), pp. 100, 107.

¹⁰ B. Milewska-Ważbińska, “*Orbis Polonus* Szymona Okolskiego jako świadectwo kultury literackiej XVII wieku,” in I.M. Dacka-Górzyńska and J. Partyka (eds), *Staropolskie kompendia wiedzy*, p. 158.

¹¹ “I have not included all those arms reported / In the chronicles by others, I have only gathered / Those which may excite in our young readers / Bravery and virtue. For here, I am no chronicler / Neither do I scour the old tomes for the bearings / inscribed on their crumbling, oft forgotten pages.” M.I. Kuligowski, *Demokryt śmieszny albo śmiech Demokryta chrześcijańskiego* (Wilno: Drukarnia Akademicka Societatis Jesu, 1699), p. 143.

¹² Piskała, “Herbarz,” p. 351.

much harder to “scour the old tomes” for the yet unknown, unmentioned heraldry, to browse through documents and chronicles. Whoever undertook such work, which often took years to complete, undoubtedly deserved to be called a chronicler: “Wszystkich nie piszę herbów, które wyrażone/Są w kronikach autorów” [“I have not included all those arms reported / In the chronicles by others”]¹³. Father Kuligowski may be alluding here to Joachim Bielski,¹⁴ but most probably to Bartosz Paprocki, the author of the first modern Polish armorials whose fame survived until the eighteenth century, and in fact much longer.

Scholars have not always been inclined to view Paprocki’s heraldic work as historical writing. Jerzy Ziomek concludes:

But what is of most interest to us are works such as *Panosza to jest Wysławienie panów i pamiąt ziem ruskich i podolskich* (Kraków, 1575), *Gniazdo cnoty* (Kraków, 1578), and *Herby rycerstwa polskiego* (Kraków, 1584). They constitute heraldic writing of a specific variety—being versed or mostly versed registers of noble houses, reminiscent somewhat of Rej’s *Zwierzyniec* but also very different from it. Rej praised and bowed to the friendly nobility. Paprocki creates legends, searches for ancestors, traces back and retells family tales which are invented, or rather, cleverly and factitiously intertwined with recurring narrative motifs. One can hardly call Paprocki a historian.¹⁵

It is difficult to agree with Ziomek. *Panosza*, a presentation of heraldry in verse, may not yet constitute the work of a historian; however, *Gniazdo cnoty* definitely does.

The non-paginated introduction, containing, among other things, a dedication to King Stephen Báthory and a foreword to the reader, is followed by a magnificent woodcut depicting Lech and Czech, and headed with an inscription typical of chronicles: “Masz tu naprzód jako się to zacne Królestwo Polskie zaczęło, kto rozszerzył na dłuż i na szerz granice jego, według dawnych historyków opisania. Roku po Narodzeniu na świat Syna Bożego 550” [“This is the account of how the noble Polish Kingdom began and of those who extended its borders in all directions, as was written down by the historians of old. Anno Domini 550”].¹⁶ The image opens a gallery of royal portraits (which had been already used earlier by the publisher, Maciej Miechowita)¹⁷ bearing the names of subsequent rulers and dates.

As the fabulous tales cover only a dozen or so pages, they are filled with images of, among others, Krakus, Princess Wanda, and Prince Popiel

¹³ Kuligowski, *Demokryt*, p. 143.

¹⁴ Piskała, “Herbarz,” pp. 346–347, 351.

¹⁵ J. Ziomek, *Renesans* (Warszawa, 1980), pp. 391–392.

¹⁶ B. Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty* (Kraków: Drukarnia Andrzeja Piotrkowczyka, 1578), p. 1.

¹⁷ J. Krauze-Karpińska, “XVI-wieczne drukowane realizacje tekstów heraldycznych,” *Rocznik Polskiego Towarzystwa Heraldycznego*, 13 (2014), p. 85.

eaten alive by mice. The same image, presenting twelve voivodes wielding swords and spears, will be repeated twice for two interregna which befell Poland “after the demise of Lech’s offspring”¹⁸ and “after Wanda’s death.”¹⁹

The inscription above the portrait of Mieszko I reads: “Mieszko, syn Zemomisławów, który się był ślepo urodził, na Monarchiją Polską obran roku 962” [“Mieszko, the son of Siemomysł, who was born blind, elected a ruler of the Polish Kingdom in 962”].²⁰ The crowned figure of the monarch wielding a scepter and rising as if from a grapevine has to its right a small portrait of his wife Doubravka (signed: “dziewka księżęcia czeskiego” [“daughter of the Bohemian prince”]),²¹ and to its left a portrait of his son Bolesław (“którego potym Ruś nazwali Chrabry” [“later called Chrabry by the Rus”]).²² The reign of the first Christian Polish ruler is described in verse consisting of only twelve lines.²³ The poem found under the portrait of Stephen Báthory, crowned King of Poland shortly before the work’s publication, is even four lines shorter.²⁴

If one were asked to define the main subject of the work, one would have to reply: battles of knights (presented here as the founders of individual houses) led by the Polish rulers against the enemies of Poland. Thematically, *Gniazdo cnoty* resembles the chronicle by Gallus Anonymus (who, as Paweł Żmudzki notes, “explicitly declared that the history of armed conflicts constitutes the subject matter of his work”)²⁵ but, on the other hand, ordered by date, it approximates the historiography of the Długosz type. Historical contents are conveyed here to the same degree through words and images.

Paprocki carefully reproduces the genealogy of the royal house (two of them, actually, the Piasts and the Jagiellonians), depicted quite clearly on the pages of *Gniazdo cnoty*, an illustrated book after all. The images of rulers (repeated every now and then, because the number of monarchs surpassed the number of woodcut blocks) are surrounded by smaller portraits of their wives and children. Each of them is signed. One can see clearly who gave birth to whom and who inherited the throne from whom. All of it resembles a family tree except that the tree has been cut into pieces. But it is enough to reassemble it in the imagination to recognize its magnificence. Because genealogy was, in a sense, Paprocki’s profession, in his book smaller trees of the noble families grow around the royal tree, figuratively speaking.

¹⁸ Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, p. 3.

¹⁹ Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, p. 5.

²⁰ Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, p. 13.

²¹ Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, p. 13.

²² Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, p. 13.

²³ Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, p. 13.

²⁴ Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, p. 1242.

²⁵ P. Żmudzki, *Władca i wojownicy. Narracje o wodzach, drużynie i wojnach w najdawniejszej historiografii Polski i Rusi* (Wrocław, 2009), p. 6.

There is no doubt that contemporary readers must have viewed the first modern Polish armorial as a chronicler's work. However, referring to it as a chronicle today may raise objections, as it differs too much from present-day popular ideas about armorials.²⁶ But reading, or even leafing through the pages of Paprocki's armorial from the beginning to the end—from the reign of King Lech to Stephen Báthory—will reveal the structure of a chronicle whose author strictly follows the chronological order, measuring the passage of time with the term of reign and regnal years that accompany not only the names of rulers and their portraits but also nobility's armorial bearings, which are therefore no longer ahistorical.

The structure of *Gniazdo cnoty* is defined by its function: to present heraldry alongside genealogies but also to tell the history of Poland. However, Paprocki's account of the national history is completely different from those of his predecessors. His work differs from the earlier chronicles by presenting the events from the perspective of the noble families rather than the perspective of the state and its dynasties.²⁷

The character of *Gniazdo cnoty* as a chronicle will be emphasized when we compare it to the work by Bielski—not Marcin, but his son, Joachim—whose text is a greatly expanded version of Book 8 of *Kronika wszytkiego świata* (1551, 1564). The added element includes armorial bearings drawn on the margins, and armorial legends—taken by the author of *Kronika polska* (1597) from Paprocki—and woven, as they are in *Gniazdo cnoty*, into the chronology of general history, which in both chroniclers can be viewed as “the ultimate sign of the genealogical time intertwining with the state time, and a testimony to the gentry's identification with the state.”²⁸ What distinguishes Paprocki from Bielski is the fact that in the work of the former, the histories of the armorials (and the genealogies of the houses) dominate the history of the state, while the latter's work uses an opposite order.

It may be also worth to note at this point that the combination of the heraldic and historiographic matter itself was not Paprocki's original creation, for already medieval chroniclers²⁹ exhibited interest in heraldry, as may be seen in Długosz's *Annales*.³⁰

²⁶ See also Kazańczuk, “Staropolskie herbarze,” pp. 39–41.

²⁷ The publication of *Gniazdo cnoty* took place in the early years of elective monarchy, a period when the political importance of gentry notably increased. Paprocki achieved something undoubtedly profound, finding in history a place for its predecessors, which obviously legitimized their rights and privileges.

²⁸ T. Jakimowicz, *Temat historyczny w sztuce ostatnich Jagiellonów* (Warszawa, 1985), p. 90.

²⁹ O. Neubecker, *Le grand livre de l'héraldique: L'histoire, l'art et la science du blason*, adaptation française R. Harmignies (Paris, 1982), p. 28.

³⁰ See also S.K. Kuczyński, “Herby w twórczości historycznej Jana Długosza,” in P. Skubiszewski (ed.), *Sztuka i ideologia XV wieku* (Warszawa, 1978), *passim*.

Even though verse prevails in *Gniazdo cnoty*, the poetic texts included in the work—stemmata, portrayals, and heraldic legends—on some pages adjoin passages in prose. Examples of this practice include biographical accounts of the heroic deeds of several sixteenth-century personages.³¹ As a popular book, the work includes no references to sources. Instead, it contains only a general declaration, repeated several times, that something has been presented as “written down by the historians of old.” But there can be no doubt that this formula signals a familiarity with the work of the chroniclers. After all, they must be the source of all the dates used in the text.

Paprocki’s historical aptitude is fully revealed only in his second armorial, *Herby rycerstwa polskiego* (1584)—a more scholarly and extensive work in prose (interspersed with Latin and Polish verse). While working on it, he relied on the texts of Wincenty Kadłubek, *Kronika wielkopolska*, Jan Długosz, Maciej Miechowita, and Marcin Kromer.³²

The author presents the structure of *Herby rycerstwa polskiego* in the foreword to the reader.³³ The first part of the work, entitled “O Orle klejnocie, który tylko samym królom polskim należy,” describes the reign of Polish rulers from Lech to Louis the Hungarian. Here, it is worth to note the citation from the chronicle by Gallus Anonymus.³⁴ Two subsequent parts of the armorial present—supposedly in chronological order—the heraldry of the Polish gentry, genealogies of particular houses, and fragments of the biographies of their more significant representatives. Part four, opening with a description of *Pogoń* (Pahonia), the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, presents the ancestors of the Jagiellonian dynasty and the history of the monarchy after the Polish–Lithuanian union: from King Władysław Jagiełło to Stephen Báthory. The work concludes with “the fifth books,” describing heraldic symbols of the Polish voivodships and lands.

But considering the structure of Paprocki’s second armorial, discussed above, it would be difficult to view the whole of it as a chronicle. It is rather a compendium of heraldic–genealogical–biographical information, interestingly, ordered chronologically and placed within the historical framework of the Commonwealth (parts one and four).

Herby rycerstwa polskiego combines, as *Gniazdo cnoty* did, the two aspects of history: that of the state, on the one hand, and that of the “noble nation,” on the other. For this reason, they should be treated as unprecedented and exceptional works.

³¹ Paprocki, *Gniazdo cnoty*, pp. 1031–1033, 1162–1165, 1183–1186, 1235–1238.

³² W. Dworzaczek, “Paprocki Bartłomiej,” in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 25 (Wrocław, 1980), p. 179.

³³ B. Paprocki, *Herby rycerstwa polskiego* (Kraków: K.J. Turowski, 1858), pp. 10–11.

³⁴ Paprocki, *Herby*, pp. 19, 25–26.

Ziomek, as has already been mentioned, did not recognize Paprocki as a historian. But this is already an outdated perspective, and others even refer to the author of *Gniazdo cnoty* as a “critical historian.” Marek Cetwiński does it in the intriguing title of his article about “Paprocki as a critical historian,” where he notes:

The history of Poland—as this is the essence of *Herby* [emphasis M.K.]—is from now on no longer the work of monarchs, but of the entire political class. In the era of the first elections such view seemed only natural—after all, this is when the collective gentry (and not the hereditary monarch) became the sovereign. Within the estate the idea of equality has not yet triumphed fully; some houses were still considered superior because of their seniority. The chronological order of Bartosz Paprocki’s *Herby* is a poignant illustration of this state of affairs. Further progress of the gentry democracy and the doctrine of equality within the estate resulted in the replacement of the chronological order by the alphabetical order in the newer Polish armorials. Thus, Old Polish heraldry works became a sensitive indicator of the developments in the gentry democracy. The latter, in turn, gives birth to the conviction that history is a work of a collective and not of individuals, even if they were crowned individuals. This is an important shift in the understanding of history, and it was Bartosz Paprocki, developing the ideas of his predecessors, who expressed it in his works. This allows us to view him as one of the pioneers in understanding history in a manner quite similar to the current approach.³⁵

The responsibilities of a chronicler–heraldist, which the author of *Herby* successfully fulfilled and Kuligowski managed to avoid, were taken on bravely by Kasper Niesiecki. This resulted in four large volumes widely believed to be the greatest Old Polish armorial. Even a glance is enough to see how much it differs from Paprocki’s work, mostly in the arrangement dictated not by chronology but by the alphabet (ordering both the heraldry and the houses), which transforms the book into a heraldic–genealogical compendium. Had the author of *Korona polska*, like his predecessor, ordered the houses hierarchically according to seniority, he would have possibly induced an even greater resentment from the gentry, highly sensitive about their origin.³⁶

Cetwiński is certainly right to note that the idea of equality had an impact on the shape of later Polish armorials, even though elevating some families above others was somewhat unavoidable. Niesiecki obviously wrote a lot about the “great” houses, and less or almost nothing about the smaller ones, since he often simply did not know about their existence and the languid readers were slow in supplying necessary information, which frustrated him.³⁷ However, despite causing much dissatisfaction among his

³⁵ M. Cetwiński, “‘Nie tylko Walgierz i Helgunda’ czyli Paprocki jako historyk krytyczny,” *Rocznik Polskiego Towarzystwa Heraldycznego*, 13 (2014), pp. 12–13.

³⁶ W. Dworzaczek, “Niesiecki Kasper,” in *Polski Słownik Biograficzny*, vol. 23 (Wrocław, 1978), 49.

³⁷ K. Niesiecki, *Korona polska*, vol. 4, (Lwów: Drukarnia Collegium Lwowskiego *Societatis Jesu*, 1743), pp. 817–818.

contemporaries, Niesiecki deserves the respect of posterity, as he carried out his task reliably and fully.

The range of research conducted by the diligent Jesuit was described with admirable thoroughness by Iwona M. Dacka.³⁸ Niesiecki used, inter alia, historiographical, biographical, and hagiographical works, which did not remain without impact on *Korona polska*'s generic structure. Presenting the histories and genealogies of noble families and the origins of their heraldry constitutes just one aspect of Niesiecki's work, which includes also biographies of distinguished personages: military commanders, writers, secular dignitaries, and clergy. Even more attention is given to the lives of Polish saints as well as pious and holy men (especially from the Society of Jesus) and women.³⁹

Ciało swoje wykwintnie katowała, już paskami, już manelkami drutowymi, już włosienicą, już postami. Nadto ręce do góry podniesione bez podpory długo trzymała, pokrzywami się siekła, stoczki o ciało swoje gasiła.⁴⁰

Several pages include heartening stories related to the portrayed persons. Some of these narratives repeat exempla from the sermons by his confrere, Franciszek Kowalicki, who was active in the same period.⁴¹

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, Ewaryst Andrzej Kuropatnicki argued that Niesiecki:

Failed in his intention, since he undertook to write about heraldry, houses, their beginnings and ornaments, but in fact tried to present his congregation as noble, the life of its members as wondrous and holy, and finally committed to immortal memory the founders and benefactors of the order and their deeds.⁴²

This is hardly a fair assessment, since the Jesuit wrote more "about heraldry, houses, their beginnings and ornaments" than any of his predecessors. But he indeed often moved beyond the heraldic-genealogical matter. His work reveals itself, thus, as not only a heraldic compendium interspersed with biographies of prominent Poles but also as a collection of exempla and lives of saints. What may have influenced this shape of *Korona polska*? Stierle

³⁸ I.M. Dacka, *Korona polska Kaspra Niesieckiego. Pomnik staropolskiego piśmiennictwa heraldycznego* (Warszawa, 2004), pp. 61–160.

³⁹ M. Kazańczuk, "Korona polska Kaspra Niesieckiego jako dzieło religijne," *Pamiętnik Literacki*, 86/2 (1995), pp. 139–151.

⁴⁰ "She tormented her body exquisitely, with straps, wire bracelets, cilice and fasting. In addition, she kept her arms raised high with no support, flogged herself with nettles, put out tapers on her body." K. Niesiecki, *Herbarz polski*, ed. J.N. Bobrowicz, vol. 6, (Leipzig, 1841), p. 159.

⁴¹ *Historie dziwne i straszliwe. Jezuickie opowieści z czasów saskich*, ed. M. Kazańczuk (Chotomów, 1991), pp. 81, 83, 91–93, 95–97, 107.

⁴² E.A. Kuropatnicki, *Wiadomość o klejnocie szlacheckim oraz herbach domów szlacheckich w Koronie Polskiej i Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim* (Warszawa: Drukarnia Michała Grölla, 1789), p. vi.

claims that the constitution of the text “depends on the use one makes of it.”⁴³ It matters, therefore, who writes the text and for whom the text is written. The abundance of religious content in Niesiecki’s armorial can be explained, naturally, by the consecrated profession of the author. But there are also other reasons, including the collective addressee of the book—namely, the thoroughly Catholic gentry of the Saxon period.

Interestingly, three subsequent volumes of the work are dedicated to women (the fourth one has no dedication)—Saint Mary, Marianna Tarło (née Potocka) and Franciszka Urszula Radziwiłłowa (née Wiśniowiecka). The pious addressee of the second volume, wife of Adam Tarło, was a daughter of an equally devout mother, one who “tormented her body exquisitely.” The virtuous Krystyna Potocka (née Lubomirska), benefactor of the Krasnystaw Jesuits, is given much more attention in the book than her brother, the famous Stanisław Herakliusz Lubomirski.⁴⁴

Kasper Niesiecki addressed his work to a specific audience, one which also included women. Were they the reason why he decided to write it in Polish?

Upon investigation, Paprocki’s and Niesiecki’s armorials reveal a heterogeneous structure indicating an unusual generic diversity. Their dissimilarities are striking, but what they have in common is the fact that all three refer—in various ways—to the history of the state, even *Korona polska*, as can be seen in the introductory part of volume one. As many as 284 pages are given to heraldry: of the Kingdom of Poland, the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, chapters, voivodeships, and lands. Graphic representations of the bearings are accompanied by an extensive historical commentary including also lists of Polish and Lithuanian rulers, hierarchs of the church, and state officials.⁴⁵ The idea of combining all of this with the history of the noble families brings to mind Paprocki’s historiosophical idea, valid, as it turns out, not only during the emergence of the electoral monarchy but also near the end of the Commonwealth.

The introduction to *Korona polska*, consisting of a comprehensive description of the country and the state—this is how the chroniclers of old opened their works—supports the argument that it is the chronicle that serves as an epistemological framework for Niesiecki’s armorial. The difference between the Jesuit’s descriptions and the chronological account in Jan Długosz’s famous *Roczniki*⁴⁶ involves not the topographical categories but the heraldic ones. The constituent elements of the Kingdom are represented

⁴³ Stierle, “Historia jako exemplum,” p. 337.

⁴⁴ Niesiecki, *Herbarz*, pp. 157–163.

⁴⁵ Dacka, “*Korona polska*,” pp. 59–60.

⁴⁶ J. Długosz, *Annales seu cronicae incliti Regni Poloniae* (Warszawa, 1965), pp. 65–114. See also D. Rott, *Staropolskie chorografie* (Katowice, 1995), pp. 99–123.

here by the heraldry of voivodeships and lands. A similar arrangement can also be found in the introductory part of Joachim Bielski's chronicle, where the description of Poland begins with geography and ends with heraldry:

Krakowskie województwo na chorągwi używa Orła białego w złotej koronie, w czerwonym polu, a przez skrzydła ma złotą linią. W tymże województwie jest ziemia sądecka, która też ma osobną swą chorągiew, na której na prawej stronie są trzy stryfy czerwone, a trzy żółte, a na drugiej dziewięć gwiazd w czerwonym polu.⁴⁷

Niesiecki's text practically mirrors this passage:

Herb jego Orzeł biały w złotej koronie, w polu czerwonym, przez skrzydła ma złotą linią. ... W tymże województwie trzy się ziemie rachują. Pierwsza sądecka, ta na prawej stronie chorągwi nosi za herb trzy stryfy czerwone i trzy żółte, tak że po każdej czerwonej żółta alternatą następuje, a na drugiej stronie dziewięć gwiazd w czerwonym polu, we trzy rzędy rozłożonych, w każdym zaś rzędzie po trzy gwiazdy jedna pod drugą.⁴⁸

Naturally, not all Old Polish armorials took the form so heavily saturated with historical content. Kuligowski, who did not share the historiographic ambition ("I am no chronicler"), created a work of an entirely different nature. Even the verse *Gniazdo cnoty*, on a deeper level, has little in common with the former. It would also be difficult to find significant similarities between Kuligowski and Kołozwarski. Nevertheless, the heraldic chronicle as well as the heraldic-genealogical compendium, a collection of poems about heraldry and a heraldic rhetoric—all must be encompassed by the generic boundaries of the armorial, as Magdalena Piskała claims.⁴⁹ If so, then we should probably ask about the common denominator of these forms. Here, the word "collection" springs to mind. Indeed, all of the discussed armorials constitute collections. And, on the other hand, no single presentation of a coat of arms, even when accompanied by genealogical lineage, as in the case of the printed funeral sermon, can be recognized as an armorial.

A contemporary definition of the armorial refers to "a book consisting of descriptions or depictions of heraldic arms, commentaries on their

⁴⁷ "Kraków Voivodeship has on its banner a White Eagle in a golden crown, in a red field, with a golden line across the wings. The voivodeship includes the Sandec Land, which has its own banner as well, with three red and three yellow stripes on its right side, and on the other, nine stars in a red field." J. Bielski, *Kronika polska* (Kraków: Drukarnia Jakuba Siebeneychera, 1597), p. 4. See also A. Gwagnin, *Sarmatiae Europaeae descriptio* (Spira: Drukarnia Bernarda Albina, 1581), f. 33r–34r.

⁴⁸ "This voivodeship's coat of arms is a White Eagle wearing a golden crown, in a red field, and a golden line across the wing ... the voivodeship consists of three lands. The Sandec Land has on its banner three red stripes and three yellow ones on its right side, so that each red stripe alternates with the yellow one, and on the other side there are nine stars in a red field, distributed in three rows, three stars in each row." K. Niesiecki, *Herbarz polski*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1839–1846), p. 124.

⁴⁹ Piskała, "Herbarz," p. 355–366.

origin, and information about the families using them.”⁵⁰ However, the eras which produced the Old Polish heraldic collections did not produce their definition, and “did not adopt fully the Western European models, nor did they create their own models for the subsequent heraldists to follow.”⁵¹ Heraldry and genealogy spread to so many areas of Old Polish writing that works created in this field were written in several language registers: that of a chronicle, rhetoric, or poetry. This is where the trouble of contemporary scholars has its origin. The problem consists in establishing the boundaries of the genre when even the term “herbarz” itself can be problematic, although, of course, one cannot part with it.

Translated by Anna Warso

⁵⁰ M. Głowiński et al., *Słownik terminów literackich* (Wrocław, 1988), pp. 178–179.

⁵¹ Piskała, “Herbarz,” p. 356.