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## REMARKS ON THE MYTH OF THE BULWARK OF CHRISTIANITY<sup>1</sup>

In research on the notion and sense of European community a considerable role in the 15th–17th centuries was played by the problem of the Turkish menace. It was a classical example supporting the thesis that the appearance of an enemy speeds up the processes of consolidation and contributes to the shaping of self-consciousness<sup>2</sup>. Much has also been written about the attitude of Europeans — including Poles — to Turkey — and more broadly — to Islam<sup>3</sup>. A separate thread in this research consists of works devoted to Poland as the bulwark of Christianity<sup>4</sup>. They

<sup>1</sup> This article has been prepared on the basis of material collected in the years 1992 and 1993 in the Herzog–August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel, Germany.

<sup>2</sup> *Dziesięć wieków Europy. Studia z dziejów kontynentu (Ten Centuries of Europe. Studies in the History of the Continent)*, ed. J. Żarnowski, Warszawa, 1983, see especially studies by B. Gerek, *Więź i poczucie wspólnoty w średniowiecznej Europie (Social Tie and the Sense of Community in Medieval Europe)*, pp. 19–81, and by J. Tazbir, *Europa — pojęcie i świadomość wspólnoty w dobie Odrodzenia (Europe — the Notion and Sense of Community in the Renaissance Era)*, pp. 82–117.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. C. Backvis, *Les slaves devant la "leçon" turque à l'aube des temps modernes*, "Revue de l'Université de Bruxelles" VII, 1954/55, pp. 144 ff.; M. Bataillon, *Mythe et connaissance de la Turquie en Occident au milieu du XVI<sup>e</sup> s.*, in: *Venezia e l'Oriente fra Tardo Medioevo e Rinascimento*, a cura di A. Pertusi, Firenze 1966, pp. 451–470; M. Bogucka, *La noblesse polonaise face à l'Orient. Entre la fascination et l'effroi (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVII<sup>e</sup> ss.)*, in: *L'histoire à Nice. Actes du colloque franco-polonaise d'histoire*, 1980, vol. 3. Nice 1981, pp. 17–28; M. Ciccarini, *Il richiamo ambivalente. Immagini del Turco nella memorialistica polacca del Cinquecento*, Bergamo 1991; N. Daniel, *Islam and the West. The Making of an Image*, Edinburgh 1960; A. Danti, *L'aspetto utopico della letteratura antiturca in Italia e Polonia a alla meta del XVI secolo*, in: *Italia, Venezia e Polonia tra Medio Evo e eta moderna*, Firenze 1980, pp. 551–570; C. Göllner, *Turcica. Die Türkenfrage in den öffentlichen Meinung Europas in 16 Jh.*, Bucuresti–Baden–Baden 1978; A. Malvezzi, *L'Islamo e la cultura europea*, Firenze 1956; R. W. Southern, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, Oxford 1962.

<sup>4</sup> Among others: U. Borkowska, *The Ideology of Antemurale in the Sphere of Slavic Culture*, in: *The Common Christian Roots of the European Nations. An International Colloquium in the Vatican*, Florence 1983, pp. 1206–1221; H. Olszewski, *Ideologia Rzeczypospolitej — przedmurze chrześcijaństwa. Refleksje*

have one characteristic in common. Their authors, influenced by the propaganda from the 15th century onwards calling ever more urgently for creating an anti-Turkish league, propaganda that emphasized the universal character of the Turkish menace, overlook the fact of the profound split of Christianity since the beginning of the 16th century, as well as of the repercussions of this split in the visions of the Turkish problem at that time.

European literature devoted to the Turkish menace was extremely abundant in the 16th century. C. Göllner estimates it at about 5.2 thousand printed publications, including as many as a thousand in German<sup>5</sup>. J. Deny once put forward the supposition<sup>6</sup> that the large campaign of anti-Turkish prophecies was initiated by Charles V. The emperor was superstitious, and besides, he was not only interested in astrology but also used it for political purposes. It should be added, he was not an exception in this respect. The 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries were an era of magic and astrology and many rulers took recourse to this sphere of practices. The renowned Rudolf II is not the only example<sup>7</sup>, for the same may be said of the Polish King Sigismund Augustus whose fascination for the world of magical and astrological ideas is well known to researchers.

Coming back to Charles V, it should be noted that it was he who inspired the set of prognostics concerning the future of the Habsburg-Burgundy house, among others the interesting *Keyserliche Practica* of 1530 whose author, presenting himself as a hundred year old (!) neophyte, a disciple of a Turkish astronomer, describes the events of 1425–1550 and foretells the unification of Christianity under the Emperor's rule<sup>8</sup>. Nevertheless, it seems that the development of visionary literature cannot be

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*w związku z 300-letnią rocznicą odsieczy wiedeńskiej (The Ideology of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth — the Bulwark of Christianity. Reflections on the Occasion of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Polish Relief to Vienna)*, "Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne", 1983.

<sup>5</sup> C. Göllner, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup> J. Deny, *Les pseudo-prophéties concernant les Turcs au XVI<sup>e</sup> s.*, "Revue des Etudes Islamiques" X, f. II, 1936, p. 205. Cf. also on this subject D. Cantimori, *Note a alcuni aspetti della propaganda religiosa nell' Europa del Cinquecento*, "Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance" 28, 1957, pp. 343–346.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. R. J. W. Evans, *Rudolf II and His World. A Study in Intellectual History 1576–1612*, Oxford 1973; J. Janáček, *Rudolf II a jeho doba*, Praha 1987.

<sup>8</sup> *Keyserliche Practica und prognosticon... durch den hochgelerten Meyster Alofsant zu Rhodis*, s. I. Herzog-August-Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel (henceforward cit. HAB) 124.4 Quodl. (10).

exclusively attributed to the Emperor's inspiration who in this way steered public opinion. This phenomenon had a broader basis and deeper roots. The fact that the millennial-apocalyptic atmosphere grew denser was due to the deep psychological restlessness and frustration of all the social groups in the Protestant German Reich, connected to the political and religious conflicts that were growing sharper since the outbreak of the Reformation. The Peace of Augsburg, on which at the beginning much hope was pinned, did not lead to a permanent subsidence of unrest or put an end to the feud of those of different faiths. Soon after its conclusion, the Council of Trent and the wide-ranging ideological and political offensive of the Catholic Church aroused great anxiety among the German Protestants. Religious wars waged in neighbouring countries (France, the Netherlands) exacerbated the sense of uncertainty and menace. This was an excellent fuel for the development of an apocalyptic atmosphere, especially since successive Turkish conquests in Europe aroused fear and horror. Many voices were heard about the coming end of the world, even concrete dates were given, based on complicated calculations derived from the analysis of *The Bible* and *The Apocalypse*<sup>9</sup>. Among the crowd of prophecies and prognostics many concern the Turkish menace, almost all the visionaries and astrologers spoke about the threat of the invasion by the Turks, they showed terrible pictures of their conquest of more and more countries of Europe, perceiving in it the symptoms of the wrath of God and His punishment for sins, as well as the portent of the inevitable coming of the end of the world.

The coming of the end of the world and the Last Judgement was believed to have been indicated by wonders and uncanny events (the birth of deformed babies, miraculous healings, resurrections, revelations and visions) and other phenomena (signs appearing in the sky, especially comets, rainbows, unusual arrangements of clouds, as well as thunder-storms, bolts of lightning, etc.). They were presented in scores of leaflets and

<sup>9</sup> Cf. on this subject R. B. Barnes, *Prophecy and Gnosis. Apocalypticism in the Wake of the Lutheran Reformation*, Stanford, Calif. 1988; H. U. Hoffman, *Luther und die Johannes-Apokalypse*, Tübingen 1982; G. List, *Chiliasmische Utopie und radikale Reformation: Die Erneuerung der Idee vom tausendjährigen Reich im XVI. Jh.*, München 1973; W. E. Peuckert, *Die grosse Wende. Das apokalyptische Saeculum und Luther*, Darmstadt 1966; R. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk. Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation*, Cambridge 1981.

pamphlets, frequently illustrated by woodcuts. This cheap, sensational literature reached a wide public, exerting considerable influence on the social mentality. Recently such popular printed works have been more and more often taken up as the subject of study by historians of culture<sup>10</sup>. The thread of the Turkish menace appears in this literature very often. The Turk is treated in it as one of the instruments of the wrath of God, and at the same time a warning — a messenger of the final judgement coming to sinners<sup>11</sup>.

In the arrangement of clouds, people frequently perceived the sign of the Islamic Crescent, men in turbans, as well as camels<sup>12</sup>. Turkish features were often detected in the lines on the wings of the locust, or in the forms of hail-stones<sup>13</sup>. The moralists who thundered against the fashion for wide trousers with slits down the legs, which had been spreading since the middle of the 16th century, predicted that the Turks would cut and wound the calves and thighs of German children in this way, as they had already done to Christians in Hungary<sup>14</sup>. The anatomy of deformed human and animal foetuses was also analysed from this point of view. As early as the middle of the 16th century, Job F i n c e l i u s, the author of a well known collection of prodigies, cited many such examples. The birth of numerous monsters was announced by newspapers and ephemeral publications. In 1564 in Erfurt, a song was published about a monster born in Werringschleben, a nearby village: the head of the baby was shaped like a "Turkish conical hat"<sup>15</sup>. Similar monsters were supposed to be born in

<sup>10</sup> Cf. R. Habermas, *Wunder, Wunderliches, Wunderbares. Zur Profanisierung eines Deutungsmuster in der Frühen Neuzeit*, in: *Armut, Liebe, Ehre. Studien zur historischen Kulturforschung*, ed. R. van Dülmen, Frankfurt/M 1988, pp. 38–66; K. Park, L. J. Daston, *Unnatural Conception. The Study of Monsters in France and England*, "Past and Present" 92, 1981 August, pp. 20–54; H. Schilling, *Job Finckel und die Zeichen der Endzeit*, in: *Volkserzählung und Reformation. Ein Handbuch zur Tradierung und Funktion von Erzählstoffen und Erzählliteratur im Protestantismus*, ed. W. Brückner, Berlin 1974, pp. 326–392.

<sup>11</sup> J. W. Bohnstedt, *The Infidel Scourge of God: The Turkish Menace as Seen by German Pamphleteers of the Reformation Era*, "Transactions of the American Philosophical Society", n. s. 58, pt. 9, December 1968, pp. 1–48; cf. also R. B. Barnes, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 85–86.

<sup>12</sup> Cf., 1562, HAB 243.24.3 Quodl. (1); 1563, 124.4. Quodl./15/; 1593, 198.13 Hist.27.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. HAB 455.7 Hist. vol. I, p. 55 recto.

<sup>14</sup> Andreas Musculus, *Vom Hosen Teuffel*, Anno MDLV, s.l., HAB 293. 8.2 Quodl.

<sup>15</sup> HAB 288.2 Hist. /22/.

1577 in Grewersmulen in Mecklenburg<sup>16</sup>, and in 1580 in Havelberg in Marck<sup>17</sup>. In 1595 in Frankfurt-an-der-Oder a publication appeared presenting a new-born baby who had a big head with an excrescence shaped like "a Turkish hat", and surrounded by a string resembling a viper with pointed tongue — such was the shape of the folds of its body. Under "the hat" there was a mouth like a wolf's *als wollte er alles zu sich reissen und fressen*. The author explained that the big head and the Turkish hat were symbols of the power of the Ottoman Empire and the wolf's mouth represented the bloodthirsty Turk who wanted to devour and conquer the whole world<sup>18</sup>.

Many leaflets and pamphlets foretelling the end of the world saw the main proof that the end of time was near in the fact that the Antichrist had already appeared. The Antichrist was represented by the Papacy<sup>19</sup>, this Roman-Babylonian whore, but also

<sup>16</sup> *Bildnis und Gestalt einer erschrecklichen unnatürlichen und ungewöhnlichen Geburt eines Kindes welches Anno MDLXXVII den XX Decembris zu Greuesmulen in Land zu Mecklenburg von eines Schneiders M. B. ehelichen Hausfrauen geboren ist. Neben warhafftigen Bericht von dieser Geburt und einer Erinnerung und Vermanung D. Simonis Pauli. Erstlich zu Rostock [...] zum andern mal [...] zu Hamburg gedruckt, HAB 254. 1 Quodl. /10/.*

<sup>17</sup> *Beschreibung und Deutung der zweien Missgeburten so Anno Christi 1580 12 Dec. nach Mittage zwischen 7 und 8 Uhrn zu Havelberg inn der Marck von einer Frawen geboren [...] durch Petrum Rinovium Havelbergensem und Petrum Victorium Welsenacensem, Predigern daselbst, Anno MCLXXXI, s.l., HAB 254. 1 Quodl. /13/.*

<sup>18</sup> *Wahrhafte Neue Zeitung von einer erschrecklichen menschlichen Missgeburt welche geboren hat ein Weib mit Namen Elisabeth Schmidin, Adam Schmid's Hausfrau wohnhafft in einem Flecken Windel genannt, welchen zu Meylen von Frankfurdt an der Oder gelegen, geschehen den 28 Novembris in disem 1595 Jahre. Item eine kurze Erklärung und Vermahnung an alle Christen was solches alles bedeuten und mit sich bringen oder hernach folgen möchte, HAB 198. 13 Hist. /16/. Cf. also M. B o g u c k a, Missgeburt im türkischen Hut. Beitrag zur Psychose "Feind aus dem Osten" an der Schwelle der Neuzeit, "Acta Poloniae Historica" 73, 1996, pp. 153–156.*

<sup>19</sup> *Cf. Entdeckung aller Geheimnissen in der Apocalypsi oder Offenbarung S. Johannis begriffen. Darinnen die Zeiten und Jahren der Regierung des Antichristis /wie auch des Jüngsten Tages/... Von Joanne De Napeler, Herrn de Merchiston, erstmals in Scotischer Sprache aus Licht gegeben. Jetzt aber treulich verdeutschet /Durch Leonem De Dromna... Gedruckt zu Gera... Im Jahr 1611, HAB 244 Quodl. 1 /5/. Prognosticon Theologicon. Oder Theoloische Weissagung/ von Jüngsten Tage/ Darinnen mancherley Schöne /liebliche und anmutige fragen/ von den letzten händeln dieser Welt werden erörtert/ was von der Computation der Rosen Creutzer/ und M. Pauli Nagelli Prognostico Astrologo-Cabalistico zuhalten sey/ besonders vom Tertio saeculo, dass Christus Anno 1623 sol widerkommen/ und sein Reich auff Erden ansahen/ was vor Wunder und Zeichen/ vor Krieg und Kriegsgeschrey vor dem Jüngsten Tage solle hergehen [...] Durch Georgium Rostium, Mehcelburgischen Hoffprediger zu Lüptz, Rostock 1620, HAB 287. 20 Quodl.*

by the Turk<sup>20</sup>. The English historian R. B. Barnes while commenting on these statements observes in a suggestive way that the Lutheran Antichrist had two arms — one of the Pope, another of the Turk<sup>21</sup>. Sometimes it was said there were two Antichrists<sup>22</sup>, this idea finding support in the formulations by St. John who spoke of many Antichrists<sup>23</sup>. The apocalyptic Gog and Magog was also seen as the figure of the Pope and Turk<sup>24</sup>.

This type of representation, widely disseminated, was bound to affect the way in which the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth was perceived. The Catholic, “papistical” Poland could not be treated by the Lutherans of that era as “the bulwark of Christianity”, since it was connected with the Antichrist — that is Rome. Rescue for Europe and Christians (the true ones!) could not come from the Antichrist and his allies. The Lutheran prophecies and visions of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries continually presented the figure of the Saviour, but it was not the Polish knight, but the legendary Lion of the North<sup>25</sup>.

(9); *Extremum et totale Romae Papalis excidium, Das ist: Dass das Pöbstliche Rom und Antichristliche Reich vorm Jüngsten Tage noch solle und müsse zerstöret und umbgekehret werden: Auss dess Herrn Doctoris Matthias Hoën von Hoënegg Churfürstl. Sächsischen Oberhoffpredigers etc... Gedruckt im Jahr unserer Erlösung 1631.* s.l., HAB 202.79. Quodl. (18).

<sup>20</sup> *Das vierdte und letzte Tier. Der Adler des Römischen Reichs [...] wie er entstanden und gewachsen/ wie er sich schlaffen legen/ ab und zunehmen/ und letztlich sein Endtschaft gewinnen werde,* s.l., s.d., probably 1606. HAB 202.79 Quodl. (26).

<sup>21</sup> R. B. Barnes, *op. cit.*, pp. 85–86. Cf also M. Ciccarini, *op. cit.*, p. 87, and from earlier literature H. Preuss, *Die Vorstellungen vom Antichrist im späteren Mittelalter, bei Luther und in der konfessionellen Polemik*, Leipzig 1906.

<sup>22</sup> R. B. Barnes, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> This kind of formulation appears as early as the middle of the 16th century, among other places in Job Fincellius, cf. HAB 425.7 Hist. Cf. also: *Von dem schrecklichen und betrübten Nāwem Jahr so an den Wolcken des Himmels den 28 Decembris dises 61 Jahres gesehen/ geschrieben mit feurigen roter dinten oder farben/ allen und jeglichen/ Menschen zur warnung auch besserung dieses sündtlichen lebens.* Durch M. Georgium Lichtium Francofordianum. Gedruckt zu Franckfurt an der Oder..., Anno MDLXI, HAB 214.4 Hist. (3); *Ein wolgegründete Rechnung und Zeitregister/ von Anfang der Welt/ [...] Aus Heiliger Schrift und bewertesten Historien und Büchern der Gelerten zusammen gezogen [...] Durch Georgium Nigrinum Battenburgensem/ Dienern der Kirche zu Giessen.* Gedruckt zu Urzel, Anno MDLXX, HAB 429.2 Hist., *Das vierdte und letzte Tier*, cf. note 20; *Enteckung aller Geheimmüssen*, cf. note 19; *Prognosticon Theologicum*, cf. note 19.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. *Woldenckwürdige Weissagung oder Propheceyung von den jetzigen Läuften und sonderlich von dem noch instehenten 1619 und nachfolgenden 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623 Jahren Von Johann Capistrano /einem Schlesier mit Prophetischen Gaben gezierten/ und damals weitberühmten Astronomo Anno 1460 als vor 159 Jahren geweissaget und propheceyt. Manniglich zur Warnung und sonderlicher Nachricht dem alten Exemplar Nachgedruckt in diesem 1619 Jahr,* s. l. HAB

He was bound to be a Protestant ruler. Some identified him with Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden<sup>26</sup>, others thought that one of the Saxonian electors would turn out to be the conqueror of the Turks and saviour of Europe<sup>27</sup>. Some prophecies associated the victories of this "Lion of the North" with the beginning of a "millennial" Divine Kingdom on Earth<sup>28</sup>. Others, criticising the visions of the chiliasts emphasized that the world would soon come to an end<sup>29</sup>. This was connected with the forecasts of an imminent great defeat of Turkey, forecasts in which the Pomeranian David Herlitzius especially excelled<sup>30</sup>. The rumour was often repeated that in Turkey itself the prediction was current that the Mohammedan faith would last only one thousand years, and there would be only 14 Ottoman emperors, while under the 15th the good Christians would abolish the Turkish empire<sup>31</sup>. In the above-

218.12 Quodl. (18); *Propheceyung Doctoris Philippi Theophrasti Paracelsi Anno 1546 vom Löwen auss Mitternacht. Dessgleichen D. Simonis Partlicii von Spitzberg / Mathematici etc. / Sternwarnung/ Von sechs grossen schrecklichen Veränderungen/ so auff die grosse Zusammenkunfften der beyden höchsten Planeten Saturni und Jovis in dem fewrigen Triangel von Anfang der Welt/ biss auff 1631 Jahr her erfolget/ und was noch kunfftig bis 32.33.34. und 35 Jahren/ gutes oder böses in der ganzen Welt hieraus zuvermuthen, Gedruckt Im Jar MDCXXXI, s.l., HAB 218.12 (25); *Handgreifflich-Erfüllte Prophezeyung/ von dem Löwen auss Mitternacht/ vor 106 Jahren geoffenbaret/ einen Christlichen/ gutherzigen Rathhern zu Schmalkalden/ Names/ Sigmund Gartamar/ zum Truck wider befördert. In diesem 1632 Jahr, s.l., HAB 243.7.11 Quodl.; Dess Mitternächtigen Post Reutters Adeltches und untadeliches/ dreyfaches Passport/ Darinnen seine bisher unterschiedliche abgelegte Frewdenposten/ Mit mehr als hundert und zwanzig/ Theils uhralten über drey tausend Jährigen: Theils alten etlich hundert Jährigen: Theils aber ganz spannewen/ und fast Weltkündigen Göttlichen Weissagungen und Wunderzeichen aussführlich beglaubet und bestärcket werden. Gedruckt in der erlöseten Magdeburg Anno 1632, HAB 202.79, Quodl. (29).**

<sup>26</sup> Cf. F. Berner, *Gustaw Adolph: Der Löwe aus Mitternacht*, Stuttgart 1982.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Handgreifflich-erfüllte Prophezeyung*, note 25.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. *Prognosticon oder Erklärung über den Anno 1618 erschienen Comet-Stern von dessen Operation. Von Veränderung der höchstpotentaten dieser Welt und von dem Untergang dess Türckischen Keyzers etc. Beschrieben durch Paulum Gräbner/ Weyland Pfaffherrn im Stift Magdeburg. Gedruckt im Jahr Christi 1631, s.l. HAB 202.79 Quodl. /6/.*

<sup>29</sup> Cf. HAB 218.12 /25/.

<sup>30</sup> At the turn of the 16th and the beginning of the 17th centuries. Cf. HAB 175 Hi (3), as well as the polemics between Herlitz and Bernard Messing in 1606, HAB T 369 Helmst 4' /4/ and /5/.

<sup>31</sup> *Tuba Temporis, Oder Wahrhaftige / Unfeilbare Zeitrechnung / Dergleichen die Welt noch nie gesehen hat/ Darinnen [...] erwiesen wird/ wie die Welt von anfang bis in dis lauffende 1620 Jahr ein ganz vollkommenes Seculum/ welchs in sich helt 16 Englische, 480 Seculares, 1440 Olympiacos, 5760 gewöhnliche Jahr/ erfüllet/ und wie in izto 1620 Jahre der ander Tag der Welt sich geendet habe. Sampt kurzer Chronologischer Erklerung etlicher geheimer Zahlen der H. Propheten [...]. Darmit gleichfals inwidersprechlich angezeigt wird / was diss 1620 Jahr für ein*

mentioned visions the defeat of the Turks is almost always connected with the defeat of the “papists” — indeed, both Turks and papists were treated as the enemies of God and impersonations of the Antichrist<sup>32</sup>.

In a world of such images, fears and hopes there was certainly no room for Poland as the bulwark. What is even worse, Poland and Poles appear in these prophecies — if they appear at all — as accomplices of the godless Antichrist. Two leaflets are especially noteworthy. In 1586 appeared the prophecy by a *clairvoyant* who was said to operate in Pomerania<sup>33</sup>. The pamphlet carried a suggestive description of the prophet and a summary of his speech. He looked like an angel with a beautiful face, a milk-and-roses complexion and thick fair hair reaching his shoulders; he held a shining sword in his right hand. His appearance in Stettin was to arouse quite a stir. *Als er vor Stettin ankommen hat er von Stund an mit heller lauter Stimme dermassen zu schreyen und zu predigen angefangen, dass vast alles Volck auss der Stadt zu ime zugelaufen diss gross wunder zu sehen und sein Predig anzuhören*<sup>34</sup>. This prophet predicted the approaching divine punishment; people had only two years left for doing penance. The years 1586 and 1587 were to be still fertile and peaceful, then bad crops and a terrible famine would decimate the population. On top of that the Polish king together with the Pope and the Turks would attack Germany and devastate it. However, a heroic Protestant leader would appear who would rout the enemy before 1590<sup>35</sup>.

In 1620 in Rostock, the Lutheran clergyman Georg Rost published his *Prognosticon Theologicon*, where invoking old predictions by Nectemius, Carion, Hartmann, and Para-

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*Jahr sey/ wie alle Feinde Gottes in demselben und folgenden werden Heimgesucht/ gestrafft und ewig verwüstet werden. Allen frommen Christen zu Trost gestellt. Durch M. Nicolaum Hartprechtum... Gedruckt zu Erfurd (1620?), HAB 287.20 (7).*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Zwo warhafftige Prophecayunge von zukunfftigen Dingen. Die erste von einem neuen Propheten welcher zu Stettin in Pomern dess verflossenenen 1585 Jars den ersten Septembris erschienen. Die andere von einem Fewrigen Sternen/ welcher in Calabria gesehen worden und desselbigen bedeutung was sich ungefährlich von dieser Zeit an biss auff dass 1587 und 1588 Jar zugetragen und verlauffen soll. Allen frommen Christen zur Warnung und Trost/ den Gottlosen aber zur Besserung und Buss in Truck verfertiget 1586. s.l. HAB 202.79 Quodl./35/.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*



celsus, and identifying the Papacy and the Turks with the apocalyptic Antichrist he foretold that quite soon, in 1622, *der Türcke [...] wider den Ewangelischen Keyser vom Hause Sachsen wird zu Felde liegen/ die Tataren (Wallachen) und Polen an sich ziehen/ Oesterreich/ Mähren, Böhmen/ so wohl Schlesien sehr verwüsten/ aber Gott wird dem Keyser krefftig beystehen/ dass er den Türcken in Vallibus Danubii wird erlegen/ darnach durch einen Herzog von Wittenberg Constantinopel einnehmen*<sup>37</sup>. Here again, together with the Tartars and Wallachians, Poles were called the allies of the Turks.

What conclusions should be drawn from this, certainly incomplete information? It seems that while studying the bulwark myth one cannot rely solely on the Polish anti-Turkish pamphlets, predominantly, at any rate, of Catholic provenance, that present only one point of view which arose mainly in the course of the propaganda campaign for the creation of the anti-Turkish league. We cannot overlook hundreds and thousands<sup>38</sup> of Protestant publications, especially the prognostics that presented the views of the Protestant side and at the same time shaped these views. The old-Polish gentry myth of Poland as the bulwark of Christianity had its strictly defined boundaries, even if this was not understood in the 16th and 17th century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth<sup>39</sup>. Poland seen from the perspective of the inhabitants of the Lutheran principalities of the German Reich was not — for it could not be — the saviour of menaced Europe. This statement certainly was not pleasant for the Polish gentry, yet it could not be overlooked.

(Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar)

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. note 19.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> For the number of copies and range of readership of popular publications in 16th century Germany cf. K. L. Ross, *The Devil in 16th Century German Literature. The Teufelsbücher*, Frankfurt/M 1972, pp. 108 and 115.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. M. Bogucka, *Obraz Polski i Polaków na przelomie XVI i XVII w. czyli między "przedmurzem chrześcijaństwa" a Antychrystem* (The Image of Poland and Poles at the Turn of the 16th and the Beginning of the 17th Centuries, or Between "the Bulwark of Christianity" and the Antichrist), in: *Christianitas et cultura Europae*, ed. H. Gapski, Lublin 1998, pp. 395-398.