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THE CHARACTERISTIC TRAITS OF RELIGIOUS RELATIONS IN EARLY-MODERN GDAŃSK

The 16th century was for Gdańsk a turning point in many spheres of life. A middle-size medieval city was transformed, over barely a few decades into a large modern metropolis, a centre of long-distance trade, an economic leader of the Baltic region¹. There was a sharp change in the demographic development of Gdańsk, which in the 1580s became an almost 40 thousand-strong giant, and in the first half of the 17th century reached (together with its suburbs) a population of 70 or even 100,000 inhabitants². This immense growth (even in the crisis period of the second half of the 17th and in the 18th century the population of Gdańsk amounted to 50,000) took place as a result of an extremely intensive immigration of newcomers from various European countries: the German Reich, the Netherlands, France, England, Scandinavia, and Bohemia³. They brought to the city their customs and ways of life, various views on human existence, various systems of values, beliefs and convictions. The fact that trade exchange and contacts with almost the whole of Europe were here in full bloom favoured also the influx of various ideas, artistic as well as intellectual ones. As a result, early-modern Gdańsk became a multi-ethnic and multi-denominational urban centre, also multi-cultural, especially from the social point of view: the predominantly German burghers' culture was here strongly in-

¹ M. Bogucka, *Gdańsk, nowożytna metropolia (Gdańsk, a Modern Metropolis)*, in: *Gdańsk. Z historii stosunków polsko-niemieckich*, ed. M. Andrzejewski, Warszawa 1998, p. 31ff.

² *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³ *Historia Gdańska (The History of Gdańsk)*, ed. E. Cieślak, vol. II, Gdańsk 1982, p. 508.

fluenced by the old-Polish "Sarmatian" gentry culture⁴ which had led to an original symbiosis in various spheres of life⁵.

The Reformation in Gdańsk, developing since the beginning of the 1520s under the influence of German Lutheranism⁶, was of a specific character. As a result of the permanent migration and exchange of population, Lutheranism in Gdańsk was growing in the situation of the strong interaction of various religious denominations and convictions. Of special interest is the interaction between Lutheranism and Catholicism. Beginning with the outbreak of the Reformation, the numerical proportions of believers in Gdańsk were unfavourable to Catholics; according to J. Baszanowski, in the years 1631–1655 they made up barely 6.7%, in the second half of the 17th century 11.3% of the total population of the city, as against 86% of Lutherans⁷. Nevertheless it should be borne in mind that this statistics embraces only the permanent inhabitants of the city, to which there was a constant influx of the gentry and magnates (frequently accompanied by many servants) as well as of merchants and raftsmen from the Polish lands, all of them Catholics. These non-residents, staying, however, in the town for several weeks, and sometimes for several months, practiced their religion before the eyes of Lutherans and filled the three churches which after the victory of the Reformation remained in Gdańsk in Catholic hands: those of St. Nicholas, St. Bridget, and St. Joseph; after 1683 they were joined by the newly-erected Royal Chapel. However, what mattered was not only the numbers of Catholic believers, but also the political status of their denomination. Religious toleration, guaranteed to

⁴ M. Bogucka, *Prusy Królewskie jako teren styku wielu kultur i wpływ tego zjawiska na rozwój reformacji. Przykład Gdańska (Royal Prussia as the Place of Contact of Many Cultures and the Influence of this Phenomenon on the Development of the Reformation. The Example of Gdańsk)*, in: Jan Łaski, 1499–1560, ed. W. Kriegseisen and P. Salwa, Warszawa 2001, p. 39ff.

⁵ S. Salmonowicz, *Prusy Królewskie w XVII–XVIII w. Studia z dziejów kultury (Royal Prussia in the 17th–18th Centuries. Studies in the History of Culture)*, Toruń 2002, pp. 10ff, 80ff.

⁶ M. Biskup, *O początkach reformacji luteranckiej w Prusach Królewskich (On the Beginnings of the Lutheran Reformation in Royal Prussia)*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny", 100, 1993, pp. 101–112; M. Bogucka, *Die Wirkungen der Reformation in Danzig*, "Zeitschrift für Ostforschung", 42, 1993, pp. 195–206; G. Schramm, *Danzig, Elbing, und Thorn als Beispiele städtischer Reformation, 1517–1558*, in: *Historia Integra. Festschrift E. Hassinger*, Berlin 1977, pp. 125–154.

⁷ J. Baszanowski, *Statystyka wyznań a zagadnienia etniczne Gdańska w XVII–XVIII w. (The Statistics of Denominations and Ethnic Matters in 17th–18th Century Gdańsk)*, "Zapiski Historyczne", 54, 1989, fasc. 1, p. 57ff.

Royal Prussia and Gdańsk in the years 1558/59, meant religious freedom for the Lutherans, but it did not abolish the political significance of Catholicism in this region. Gdańsk functioned within the framework of the Catholic Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth, the superior authority of the town was the Catholic ruler of Poland. Two Catholic bishops (of Warmia and Chełmno) exerted an enormous influence on the internal life in Royal Prussia: they both sat on the general Prussian dietine, the bishop of Warmia being as a rule the chairman of its Upper House; the bishop of Chełmno frequently meddled in the matters of Gdańsk. Apart from the demographic and political factors also the economic one was of great significance. Indeed, Polish magnates and gentry, mainly of Catholic faith, were the most important partners in trade of Gdańsk, the main suppliers of grain to its market; they were also customers not only as regards merchandize brought to Gdańsk from abroad but also produced in the city. It was their needs and tastes that to a large measure shaped the production profile of the crafts of Gdańsk. It was the customers from all over the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth that dictated to the craftsmen of Gdańsk the mass production of amber rosaries (there flourished even a special guild called “Paternostermacher”) and other objects of the Catholic cult, e.g. the images of the Virgin Mary and other saints. The objects of religious cult displayed in the stands and stalls of Gdańsk, caught the eye of its permanent residents, including Lutherans and became the items of fashion. As a result these objects are also frequently found in the death-inventories of the movables of non-Catholic inhabitants of Gdańsk⁸. The fact that despite the victory of the Reformation the cult of the saints and the Virgin Mary was alive in Gdańsk is also testified by the names given to the local ships in the 16th and 17th centuries⁹. Another proof of the survival of the Virgin Mary’s

⁸ M. B o g u c k a, *Z problematyki form życia marginesu mieszczańskiego w Gdańsku połowy XVII w. (The Forms of Life of the Margins of the Urban Community in Gdańsk in the Middle of the 17th Century)*, “Zapiski Historyczne”, 1973, fasc. 4, pp. 55–79; e a d e m, *Wdowi skarb z roku 1566. Inwentarz ruchomości Małgorzaty, wdowy po Tiedemanie Feldstete (A Widow’s Treasure of 1566. The Inventory of the Movables of Małgorzata, Tiedeman Feldstete’s Widow)*, in: *Balticum. Studia z dziejów polityki, gospodarki i kultury XVI–XVII w.*, ed. Z. H. N o w a k, Toruń 1992, p. 61ff.

⁹ The most frequently chosen patrons of the ships were: the guardian of sailors, St. Jacob, but also St. Nicholas, St. Anne, St. Martin, St. John, St. Peter, St. Paul, St. George, cf. M. B o g u c k a, *Gdańscy ludzie morza w XVI–XVIII w. (The Seamen of Gdańsk in the 16th–18th Centuries)*, Gdańsk 1984, pp. 168–169.

cult among the Lutherans in Gdańsk may also be the fierce defence by the Lutheran journeymen of Our Lady's picture; the painting was removed by the Calvinists from St. Peter and Paul's Church in 1589¹⁰. Thus the question of the cult of the Virgin Mary in Prussia is, at any rate, controversial, and requires more research, even into the earlier period of the rule of the Teutonic Order¹¹. In the 18th century the famous son of Gdańsk, Daniel Chodowiecki, had some objections when a Polish nobleman ordered him to make a miniature copy of the picture of Our Lady of Częstochowa, yet the minister whose advice he sought dispelled the painter's doubts saying that if the fee was good, he might perform this task, since otherwise it would be fulfilled by somebody else¹². It is worth adding that Chodowiecki was not a Lutheran but a very zealous Calvinist, and the whole story testifies to the wide-spread production of the objects of the Virgin Mary's cult in Gdańsk.

An analysis of the extant works of art may provide more important testimony in this respect. Katarzyna Cieślak, a prematurely deceased researcher into the art of Gdańsk, put forward the thesis that the Lutherans in this city were very tolerant towards the works of Catholic art¹³. The removal of Catholic elements from Gdańsk churches was a very slow process and, in fact, it was never fully accomplished. About the year 1600 the old Catholic churches, meanwhile transformed into Lutheran sanctuaries, were still full of old works of Catholic art; moreover, the Protestants of this town continued to order new objects of this type¹⁴. At the beginning of the 17th century the main ideologist

¹⁰ P. Arndt, *Die Danziger reformierte Gemeinde bis zu ihrer staatsrechtlichen Anerkennung im Jahre 1652*, Danzig 1928, p. 8.

¹¹ Cf. an interesting article by M. Dygło, *O kulcie maryjnym w Prusach Krzyżackich w XIV-XV w. (On the Cult of the Virgin Mary in the Teutonic Knights' Prussia in the 14th-15th Centuries)*, "Zapiski Historyczne", 1987, fasc. 2, pp. 5-38. Among the German researchers who took up this subject there was B.-M. Rosenberg, *Marienlob im Deutschen Orden bis zum Jahre 1525*, in: *Acht Jahrhunderte Deutscher Orden im Einzeldarstellungen*, hrsg. K. Wieser OT, Bad Godesburg 1967, pp. 321-337.

¹² M. Bogucka, *Daniel Chodowiecki, seine Familie und Danzig*, in: *Daniel Chodowiecki 1726-1801. Kupferstecher-Illustrator-Kaufmann*, hrsg. W. Hinrich, K. Zernack, Tübingen 1997, p. 39.

¹³ K. Cieślak, *Luterańska sztuka kościelna w Gdańsku, 1540-1793 (Lutheran Church Art in Gdańsk, 1540-1793)*, in: *Protestantyzm i protestanci na Pomorzu*, ed. J. Iluk, D. Mariańska, Gdańsk-Koszalin 1987, pp. 68ff.

¹⁴ K. Cieślak, *Życie religijne gdańskich luteran i ich recepcja sztuki kościelnej (The Religious Life of the Lutherans in Gdańsk and Their Reception of Church Art)*, in: *Mieszczanstwo gdańskie*, ed. S. Salmonowicz, Gdańsk 1997, p. 317.

of Calvinism in Gdańsk, Jacob Fabricius, wrote with indignation that a Polish raftsman was still quietly saying his prayers in a Lutheran church in Gdańsk, convinced that he was doing it in a Catholic one¹⁵. The Calvinists were much more iconoclastically-minded than the Lutherans in Gdańsk, and were disgusted at the toleration displayed by the latter.

The tolerant attitude of the Lutherans of Gdańsk was probably due not only to the above-mentioned demographic, political and economic factors, but also to the visual attractiveness of the forms of the Catholic cult. Catholic services, processions, marriages and funerals, on account of their rich, colourful setting, attracted many Lutherans who eagerly watched them and even took part in them. In a city that in the 16th and 17th centuries was rapidly growing rich, the predilection for luxury was very strong and wide-spread. In the first half of the 17th century a French diplomat, Charles Ogier, while visiting Gdańsk, noticed in his diary with surprise that great numbers of Protestants took part in the colourful Catholic rites¹⁶. As a result some Catholic ceremonies affected the behaviour of the Lutherans of Gdańsk, e.g. their *pompa funebris* certainly drew inspiration from the Polish Catholic gentry custom¹⁷.

Hence, although anti-Catholic tumults did occur in Gdańsk, such as the plunder of the Carmelite monastery and church in May 1678¹⁸, although Lutheran theologians (e.g. Aegidius Strauch), delivered sharply anti-Catholic sermons¹⁹, yet the everyday co-existence of both denominations was rather peaceful. The pastoral work in the city hospitals and in the homes for the aged and infirm, was performed by Lutheran clergymen who dispensed the sacraments to all the inmates regardless of their denomination. Rich Lutheran burghers educated their daughters in Catholic female convents (Żukowo, Żarnowiec, Chełmno). "It is

15 J. Fabricius, *Refutation-Schrift*, Oppenheim 1613, pp. 54-55.

¹⁶ Ch. Ogier, *Dziennik podróży do Polski 1635-1636 (A Diary of a Journey to Poland 1635-1636)*, ed. W. Czaplinski, Gdańsk 1950, vol. II, pp. 69-73, 167.

¹⁷ Extensively on the funeral rites in Gdańsk see: E. Kizik, *Śmierć w mieście hanzeatyckim w XVI-XVIII w. Studium z nowożytnej kultury funeralnej (Death in a Hanseatic Town in the 16th-18th Centuries. A Study in Modern Funeral Culture)*, Gdańsk 1998.

¹⁸ E. Cieślak, *Walki społeczno-polityczne w Gdańsku w drugiej połowie XVII w. Interwencja Jana III Sobieskiego (Socio-political Strife in Gdańsk in the Second Half of the 17th Century. John III Sobieski's Intervention)*, Gdańsk 1962, pp. 223-246.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

a custom, even among Lutherans themselves, to send their daughters to nunneries, where they are taught good morals and manners, and receive every honest instruction, and especially learn the Polish language” — Ogier noted²⁰. Many sons of Lutherans attended the Jesuit college in the Szkoty (Scotch) suburb of Gdańsk²¹; on the other hand many Catholics educated their children in Lutheran parish schools²². Mixed Lutheran–Catholic marriages were not an exception, either²³. Young burghers of Lutheran denomination went to central Poland for their education and learning Polish, necessary in commercial contacts with the Polish gentry. One of them was Martin Gruneweg, the son of a stall-keeper from Gdańsk in the second half of the 16th century, who as a boy was sent to Bydgoszcz to learn a merchant’s trade and was later converted from Lutheranism to Catholicism²⁴. The culture of the gentry and magnates with their ostentation in costume, gesture and behaviour, in their whole way of life in fact, impressed the burghers of Gdańsk and provided them with models to be followed. Catholicism, being part of that culture, also affected Gdańsk, not in the theological sense, but in respect of customs and their visual side.

The relations between Lutherans and the followers of John Calvin in Gdańsk were much more complicated. The sharpness of conflicts between them was probably due to the fact that there was a period when their competition took the form of a purely political clash — the effect of the struggle for power in this city. However, the course of events of the so-called “second Reformation” in Gdańsk, for the last few years known a little better mainly due to Michael G. Müller’s work²⁵, still arouses some doubts, among other things because of the scarcity and gaps in the sources, deliberately destroyed by the city council in the 17th century. The beginnings of Calvinism, which appeared in Gdańsk

²⁰ Ch. Ogier, *Dziennik*, vol. II, p. 143.

²¹ S. Załęski, *Jezuici w Polsce (The Jesuits in Poland)*, vol. IV, part 2, Kraków 1904, pp. 483–542.

²² J. Baszanowski, *Statystyka wyznań*, p. 72.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²⁴ M. Bogucka, *Martin Gruneweg’s Magic World. Remarks on the Early Modern Mentality*, *Acta Poloniae Historica*, vol. 86, 2002, pp. 47–56.

²⁵ M. G. Müller, *Zweite Reformation und städtische Autonomie im Königlichen Preussen. Danzig, Elbing und Thorn in der Epoche der Konfessionalisierung 1557–1669*, Berlin 1997.

at the turn of the 1560s, should be associated with the influx of Dutch immigrants, fleeing the Spanish terror. The first Calvinist predicants: Peter Jansen (1570), Josua Lagus (1580) and Isbrandus Balck (1590) held services in Dutch in private homes, sometimes in gardens outside the city²⁶. The rapid career of the new denomination which attracted many members of the urban élite — patricians, clergymen, Academic School professors — took place outside this Dutch community and was bound up with sharp conflicts of a socio-political nature among the burghers established in Gdańsk for generations. In this context an important phenomenon was the declaration of the moderately wealthy townspeople as well as the poor for Lutheranism, which was less elitist, as well as the interlocking of the religious conflict with the struggle for power in the city and the political game going on between Gdańsk and the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth for the status of this city. The anti-Calvinist upheavals of the years 1584, 1587 and 1590, the violent clashes between preachers, the assaults on the clergymen and intellectuals who favoured Calvinism (e.g. the outstanding scholar Bartholomew Keckermann and the theologian Jacob Fabricius²⁷ in women's disguise scarcely escaped their opponents) left a special stamp on the relations in Gdańsk towards the end of the 16th century. After the death of the ardent Lutheran and influential city mayor Constantine Ferber (1588), the adherents of Calvinism started to gain a majority in the city council. According to the report by a Dutch resident in Gdańsk prepared in 1598, the denominational composition of the Council of Gdańsk was as follows: out of the four mayors three were Lutherans (Daniel Zierenberg, Constantine Giese, Johannes von der Linde), and one was a Calvinist (Gerhard Brandes). Among the councillors 9 were Calvinists and 5 Lutherans²⁸. Although the general proportion was favourable to Calvinists (10 to 8), the fact that the majority of mayors were Lutherans gave the latter a strong position. In the next years the predomi-

²⁶ Cf. the book of the Dutch community of 1618, Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Gdańsk, MS 865, p. 86ff.

²⁷ P. S i m s o n, *Geschichte der Stadt Danzig*, Danzig 1918, vol. II, p. 405. Cf. also W. H. van Zuyle n, *Bartholomeus Keckermann, sein Leben und Wirkung*, Tübingen 1932. Recently R. A. M ü l l e r, "Vera Philosophia cum sacra Theologia nusquam pugnat". *Keckermann on Philosophy and the Problem of Double Truth*, "The Sixteenth Century Journal", vol. XV, N° 3, 1984, pp. 341-365.

²⁸ Gemeente Archief Amsterdam, Archief Burgermeestern, Missiven van Danzig, Portefeuille 2.

nance of Lutherans was definitely strengthened. In 1612 in Gdańsk — just as in other towns of Royal Prussia — the Lutherans gained the upper hand, supported by the central authorities — the king, who could not accept the too high ambitions of the Calvinists²⁹. In accordance with the royal decree, they were removed from holding public offices; however, three churches (those of St. Peter and Paul, St. Elizabeth and the Holy Trinity) were granted to them³⁰. The number of the followers of Calvin among the population of Gdańsk in the first half of the 17th century fell to merely 7.5%³¹.

The dispute over the Holy Trinity Church that broke out in 1650 gave rise to a new conflict; this time, however, the intervention of powerful co-religionists (the Prince of Courland, Lithuanian magnate Janusz Radziwiłł, as well as the authorities of the Republic of United Provinces — the main trade partner of Gdańsk) and the fact that this time the Polish king took sides with the Calvinists, brought about an agreement in 1651. The Calvinists were recognized as equal to Lutherans and Catholics³². However, although they now became eligible for offices, few of them actually held them (in 1651 there was only one Calvinist councillor, 2 aldermen and 15 *centumviri*)³³. The conflict of the 1670s (Aegidius Strauch) did not change much in this respect, probably because of the falling number of believers (in the second half of the 17th century they made up only about 6% of the population of Gdańsk)³⁴. The situation did not change, despite the immigration of Calvinists to Gdańsk from England and France at the end of the 17th century, and the rise of independent English and French Calvinist communities, embracing small groups of merchants, trade agents and craftsmen from both these countries³⁵.

²⁹ *Historia Gdańska*, ed. E. Cieślak, vol. II, p. 572.

³⁰ The Archive of Gdańsk, 300, R/M 8.

³¹ J. Baszanowski, *Statystyka wyznań*, p. 62.

³² A. Bues, *Das Herzogtum Kurland und der Norden der polnisch-litauischen Adelsrepublik im 16. und 17. Jh.*, Giessen 2001, p. 269.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ J. Baszanowski, *Statystyka*, p. 62.

³⁵ J. Baszanowski, *Tabele ruchu naturalnego ludności Gdańska z lat 1601–1846 (The Tables of the Natural Population Change in Gdańsk in the Years 1601–1846)*, "Przeszłość Demograficzna Polski", vol. 13, 1981, pp. 72–73.

The theologically and politically complicated history of the "second Reformation" in Gdańsk, the influence of this movement on the internal structures of the city and its relations with the central authorities and the rest of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, do not, however, explain to the full the issue we are concerned with. What matters, is the interaction of Calvinism and Lutheranism from the point of view of the culture of Gdańsk, the mentality of its inhabitants, and forms of their lives. Despite the small numbers of Calvinists in Gdańsk, their influence on its life as well as on the form of Lutheranism in this city seems considerable. As has been said, Katarzyna Cieślak has put forward the thesis that the toleration of Lutherans in Gdańsk towards the Catholic forms of church decoration arose precisely in opposition to Calvinism and its strong iconoclastic views. On the other hand, according to Cieślak, since the end of the 16th century the influence of Calvinist views and attitudes on the inhabitants of Gdańsk may be observed in various other spheres. In those years the inhabitants of Gdańsk became very fond of the opinion, connected with the teachings about predestination, that success in life is the proof of the grace of God³⁶. This led to a firm belief that the success of Gdańsk, which precisely at the turn of the 16th century was at the height of its economic prosperity, had supernatural roots: it was God who chose the town on the Motława River as a special urban centre, worthy of exceptional protection and concern. This conviction was promoted by the Calvinist élites of Gdańsk at that time, and its artistic exponent was the splendid, meticulously designed decoration of the Town Hall of the Main City. It was precisely at that time that this building took its final shape as a symbol and a kind of sanctuary of urban power³⁷. The apotheosis of Gdańsk presented on the ceiling of the Red Hall — the painting by Isaac van dem Block

³⁶ M. Bogucka, *Koniec świata z perspektywy Gdańska. Przyczynek do specyfiki gdańskiego luteranizmu w XVI i pierwszej połowie XVII wieku (The End of the World from the Perspective of Gdańsk. A Contribution to the Specificity of the Lutheranism of Gdańsk in the 16th and the First Half of the 17th Century)*, in: *Ludzie, Kościół, wierzenia. Studia z dziejów kultury i społeczeństwa Europy Środkowej (Średniowiecze — wczesna epoka nowożytna)*, ed. W. Iwańczak, St. K. Kuczyński, Warszawa 2001, p. 404.

³⁷ M. Bogucka, *Funkcje społeczno-polityczne ratusza Głównego Miasta Gdańska do końca XVIII w. (The Socio-political Functions of the Town Hall of the Main City of Gdańsk up till the End of the 18th Century)*, in: *Ratusz w miastach północnej Europy*, ed. St. Latour, Gdańsk 1997, p. 79ff.

executed according to the detailed directives issued by the Council (as we know the greater part of it was Calvinist) — presents Gdańsk as an ideal “city of God”, chosen by Providence which keeps a special vigil over it and its inhabitants. This heavenly protection embraced all the citizens of Gdańsk among whom belief in predestination was a very typical mental attitude. It finds its distinct reflection in the diary of Michael Hancke, the city scribe, who may be treated as an average, moderately wealthy inhabitant of Gdańsk in the first half of the 17th century³⁸. The eschatological ideas of the Lutherans of Gdańsk seem to be in some respects closer to the eschatology of John Calvin than of Martin Luther. Thus, for example, the dramatic tension with which the German Lutherans of the turn of the 16th century awaited the forthcoming end of the world and the Last Judgement, was rather alien to the Lutherans of Gdańsk, absorbed with everyday problems of trade and shipping; they consumed in peace the fruits of the excellent commercial prosperity of the city³⁹. The attitude toward chiliastic visionaries was quite another matter — their visions were treated much more favourably in Gdańsk. Although the group of chiliasts who came to the city in 1600 was soon dispersed by force and their leader, Englishman Thomas Leamer, was imprisoned (charged with bigamy)⁴⁰, yet it was precisely in Gdańsk that Paul Nagel, rector of Torgau and chiliastic visionary, had as many as four of his books published in the years 1620–1624. Despite the catastrophic prophecies of many Lutheran German astrologers, he predicted that the year 1624, instead of the end of the world, would bring the beginning of the “golden age”⁴¹. For Gdańsk, which at that time really experienced the “golden age”, this prophecy must have been especially convincing.

Apart from Calvinism, anabaptism also left its imprint on Lutheranism in Gdańsk. The largest group among anabaptists

³⁸ M. Bogucka, *W kręgu mentalności mieszczanina gdańskiego w XVII w. Notatnik Michała Hancke (In the Orbit of a Gdańsk Burgher's Mentality in the 17th Century. Michael Hancke's Diary)*, in: *Ars Historica. Prace z dziejów powszechnych i Polski. W 60 rocznicę urodzin prof. Gerarda Labudy*, ed. M. Biskup, Poznań 1976, pp. 617–635.

³⁹ M. Bogucka, *Koniec świata z perspektywy Gdańska*, p. 399ff.

⁴⁰ S. Kościelak, *Wolność wyznaniowa w Gdańsku w XVI–XVIII w. (Religious Freedom in Gdańsk in the 16th–18th Centuries)*, in: *Protestantyzm i protestanci na Pomorzu*, p. 107.

⁴¹ M. Bogucka, *Koniec świata*, p. 406.

were Mennonites, who came to the city from the Netherlands as early as the middle of the 16th century⁴² and settled mainly its suburbs. Proportionally, they had never been very numerous. E. Kizik estimates there were 165 of them in the 17th century⁴³. J. Baszanowski supposes they did not constitute even 1% of the totality of the inhabitants of Gdańsk at the end of the 18th century⁴⁴. It should, however, be taken into consideration that the Mennonites mainly lived in the suburbs and were not admitted into the citizenship, hence in many statistics they were not taken into account. On the other hand, in such sources as the books of the president and vice-president of the city, as well as in many judicial records, Mennonites are mentioned very frequently; this indicates that they were more numerous than the official data show, or that they were extremely mobile and active. They worked mainly as craftsmen (weavers, haberdashers, dyers, thread-makers, and producers of alcohol), as well as petty merchants and financiers, and played an important part in the economic development of Gdańsk⁴⁵. They also exerted a strong influence on the culture of everyday life in Gdańsk (furnishing and decoration of apartments, style and colour of clothes, the kind of books and pictures collected, the way of organizing family celebrations)⁴⁶.

As a result of the co-existence of various ethnic groups and religious denominations the mass culture of Gdańsk, although chiefly Lutheran, was woven of various threads. At the top, theologians and ministers conducted sharp discussions on the faith's dogmas. The debates frequently resulted in violent, generally short-lived disturbances among moderately wealthy and poor townspeople. However, generally, the Lutheranism of Gdańsk in its mass, popular version, did not lead to conflicts, but to a symbiosis. Hence many historians put forward the theses

⁴² M. Bogucka, *Gdańskie rzemiosło tekstylne od XVI do połowy XVII w. (Textile Crafts in Gdańsk from the 16th till the Middle of the 17th Century)*, Wrocław 1956, pp. 66ff; E. Kizik, *Mennonici w Gdańsku, Elblągu i na Żuławach Wiślanych w drugiej połowie XVII i w XVIII w. (Mennonites in Gdańsk, Elbląg and in the Vistula Lowlands in the Second Half of the 17th and in the 18th Century)*, Gdańsk 1994, p. 23ff.

⁴³ E. Kizik, *Mennonici*, p. 32.

⁴⁴ J. Baszanowski, *Statystyka*, p. 65.

⁴⁵ M. Bogucka, in: *Historia Gdańska*, vol. II, p. 508ff.

⁴⁶ Cf. M. Bogucka, *Prusy Królewskie jako teren styku*, p. 46ff.

about the toleration ruling in Gdańsk. However, I have certain doubts as to whether we can define in this way the relations in this city and the policy of its authorities.

In any medieval or early-modern city toleration was limited by the very idea of an urban community. The town statutes assumed that "their own people" and especially the people with full rights of citizenship would be privileged in contrast to "foreigners", or those without the status of a citizen⁴⁷. Moreover, citizenship was not open to everybody. In 16th–18th century Gdańsk citizen rights were granted to Lutherans and — though not so readily — to Catholics and Calvinists. These rights, on principle, were not granted to Scots, Gypsies, Jews, anabaptists (including Mennonites), as well as vagrants and beggars, foundlings, persons born out of wedlock or in disreputable places (street, brothel, prison)⁴⁸. Denominational and ethnic criteria were intertwined with those of "fame" and "illfame", which played such an important part in the functioning of medieval and early modern society⁴⁹.

However, in practice, the Council of Gdańsk frequently shut its eyes to the functioning in the town of people who were discriminated by law; the reasons were not so much ideological as practical. This can be seen in the case of Jews, who were backed up by influential Polish magnates and nobles, and in the case of Mennonites, who because of their capital and professional skills played an important part in the town's economy. In both cases the Council openly declared for toleration towards the representatives of both these groups and allowed them their business activity in the town⁵⁰. The councillors agreed that even a Turk (providing he had been christened) might be admitted to

⁴⁷ S. Gierszewski, *Obywatele miast Polski przedrozbiorowej (The Citizens of Towns in Pre-partition Poland)*, Warszawa 1973, passim.

⁴⁸ T. Maciejewski, *Prawo sądowe w ustawodawstwie miasta Gdańska w XVIII w. (The Law Applied in the Law-Courts in the Legislation of the City of Gdańsk in the 18th Century)*, Wrocław 1984, p. 90.

⁴⁹ Cf. R. van Dülmen, *Gesellschaft der frühen Neuzeit: kulturelles Handeln und sozialer Prozess. Beiträge zur historischen Kulturforschung*, Wien-Köln-Weimar 1993, passim.

⁵⁰ M. Bogucka, *Jewish Merchants in Gdańsk in the 16th–17th Centuries. A Policy of Toleration or Discrimination?*, "Acta Poloniae Historica", vol. 65, 1992, pp. 47–57; eadem, *Obcy kupcy w Gdańsku w pierwszej połowie XVII w. (Foreign Merchants in Gdańsk in the First Half of the 17th Century)*, "Zapiski Historyczne", vol. 37, 1972, pp. 76–77.

a guild and work in Gdańsk⁵¹. On the other hand, the Third Order, representing moderately wealthy townspeople, manifested intolerant attitudes, not so much, however, for ideologico-theological reasons, as for economic ones: its members wanted to get rid of competitors in trade and crafts. For the members of the Council the activity of Jews and Mennonites, as well as of a Turk, meant an animation of the trade and credit market in Gdańsk and bigger supply of work — i.e. cheaper craftsmen's services. For the Third Order, who were representatives of less wealthy burghers, the foreigners were dangerous rivals in business, the easiest to fight by legal repressions. The municipal authorities used in their discussions legal, historical, political and economic arguments, however, they did not reach for the arsenal of theological ideas, present mainly in the debates of intellectuals and clergymen. But even if we exclude the notion of toleration from the mental resources of early-modern townspeople, we have to admit that Lutheranism in Gdańsk in its popular, mass version was closer to syncretism than to religious fanaticism.

(Translated by Agnieszka Kreczmar)

⁵¹ M. Bogucka, *Czy Turek może być członkiem cechu? Przyczynek do dziejów tolerancji w Gdańsku w XVII w. (Can a Turk Be a Member of a Guild? A Contribution to the History of Toleration in Gdańsk in the 17th Century)*, "Przegląd Humanistyczny", Y. XLIII, fasc. 2/3, 1999, pp. 31–33.