

Maria Bogucka, *Baltic Commerce and Urban Society, 1500–1700. Gdańsk/Danzig and its Polish Context*, Variorum Collected Studies Series, Studies in East–Central Europe, General Editor: Ivan T. Berend, Aldershot 2003, Ashgate Publishers, 312 pp.

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 life¹. 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 XVII^e 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.

¹ Cf. A. Wyrobisz, *A New Approach to the History of Customs*, "Acta Poloniae Historica", vol. 74, 1996.

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 townsmen 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 Vries², Paul Bairoch³, Paul M. Hohenberg and Lynn Hollen Lees⁴, and A. L. Jastrebička⁵, as well as Ryszard Szczygieł's monograph on the urbanisation of Poland in the 16th century⁶ appeared in the 1980s and later, to say nothing of the studies concerning the urbanisation of various regions of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (Felix Kiryk, Jerzy Motylewicz), V. V. Dorosenko's monograph on Riga's trade in the 17th century⁷, 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 towns⁸ or townsmen's sepulchral monuments and epitaphs⁹ 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

² *European Urbanization 1500–1800*, London 1984.

³ *De Jéricho à Mexico: Villes et économie dans l'histoire*, Paris 1985; English edition: *Cities and Economic Development. From the Dawn of History to the Present*, Chicago 1988.

⁴ *The Making of Urban Europe, 1000–1950*, Cambridge, Mass. 1985; cf. A. Wyrobisz, *Nowe koncepcje w badaniach nad historią miast europejskich (New Concepts in Research on the History of European Towns)*, "Przegląd Historyczny" 1989.

⁵ *Европейский город (Средние века — раннее Новое время)*. Введение в современную урбанистику, Москва 1993.

⁶ *Lokacje miast w Polsce XVI wieku (The Foundation of Towns in 16th Century Poland)*, Lublin 1989.

⁷ *Torgovlja i kupečestvo Rigi v XVII veke*, Riga 1985.

⁸ T. Zielińska, *Szlacheccy właściciele nieruchomości w miastach XVIII w. (Noble Property Owners in Towns in the 18th Century)*, Warszawa 1987; eadem, *Przyczynek do sprawy własności szlacheckiej w Gdańsku XVIII stulecia (More on the Question of Noblemen's Property in Gdańsk in the 18th Century)*, in: *Ludzie. Kontakty. Kultura XVI–XVIII w.*, Warszawa 1997.

⁹ K. Cieślak, *Kościół — cmentarzem. Sztuka nagrobna w Gdańsku (XV–XVIII w.)*. "Długie trwanie" epitafium (The Church as a Cemetery. Sepulchral Art in Gdańsk (15th–18th Centuries). The "long duration" of epitaphs), Gdańsk 1992; eadem, *Epitafium obrazowe w Gdańsku, XV–XVII w. (Pictorial Epitaphs in Gdańsk, 15th–17th Centuries)*, Wrocław 1993; A. Wyrobisz, *Pomniki nagrobne mieszczan w Polsce w XVI–XVII wieku (Sepulchral Monuments of Townsmen in Poland in the 16th and 17th Centuries)*, "Kwartalnik Historii Sztuki Materialnej" 1990; eadem, *Inskrypcje nagrobne mieszczan w Polsce w XVI i XVII w. (Inscriptions on Townsmen's Graves in Poland in the 16th and 17th Centuries)*, in: *Ludzie. Kontakty. Kultura. op. cit.*

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 Karpinski'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 Karpinski and Edward Opaliński 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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